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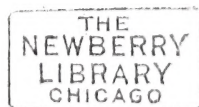
HISTORY
OF THE
FIRST CHURCH IN BOSTON,

1630—1880.

By ARTHUR B. ELLIS.

With an Introduction,
By GEORGE E. ELLIS.

ILLUSTRATED.



BOSTON:
HALL AND WHITING,
32 BROMFIELD STREET.

1881.

HISTORICAL

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HISTORY
OF THE
FIRST CHURCH IN BOSTON,
1630-1880.



“And if any tax me for wasting paper with recording these small matters, such may consider that little mothers bring forth little children, small commonwealths matters of small moment, the reading whereof yet is not to be despised by the judicious ; because small things, in the beginning of natural or politic bodies, are as remarkable as greater in bodies full-grown.”

Gov. DUDLEY's *Letter to the Countess of Lincoln.*







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Dedicated

TO THE

PRESENT MINISTER OF FIRST CHURCH,

AS A SMALL TOKEN OF LOVING REGARD, AND IN RECOGNITION OF THAT
STEADY DEVOTION TO THIS ANCIENT CHURCH, WHICH HAS DONE SO
MUCH TO STRENGTHEN AND BUILD IT AFRESH ON THE OLD
FOUNDATIONS, AND TO MAKE IT, IN HIS OWN
WORDS, A "LARGER HOUSEHOLD."



PREFACE.

THIS work, like so many others of a similar character, is the extension of a lecture. The lecture was delivered in the chapel at an informal parish gathering of the First Church. The interest which seemed to be awakened at that time among members of the congregation by the approaching celebration of the two hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the church organization, served to advance a preconceived plan of enlarging the only history of the church which had then been published. The work of Rev. William Emerson (published posthumously in 1812), prepared with great care by one who was thoroughly furnished for the task, covered the ground so completely that at the outset it was proposed merely to add a few pages bearing upon recent events without attempting to revise his publication. But as the present work advanced, finding how completely opinions had altered on some of the topics which he had so ably discussed, — transactions which were at one time obscure or shrouded in darkness having come into the light of knowledge and calling for a different treatment, — something more than an extension or enlargement of his history seemed to be necessary. The task of revision has been pursued with great caution; and, as it has proved, the qualifications arising from the discovery of



new sources of information have added so little to the earnest and laborious researches of Mr. Emerson that a large portion of his text might have been almost literally transcribed in the present work.

Dr. Frothingham was once asked why he did not write a history of the church. His reply was to the effect that he should be unable to make the dry statement of facts which it involved sufficiently interesting to induce any one to read it. It is much to be regretted that he was not persuaded to undertake the task, for it is a subject which, though dull in a common recital, would have been greatly enlivened by some of his charming and often exquisitely humorous forms of expression.

The present work attempts to arrange in concise form and chronological order the chain of events down to the present time. The authorities quoted are generally referred to in the notes. My special acknowledgments are due for the kindness with which I have been allowed the free use of the Massachusetts Historical Society Library. I am indebted to Dr. Samuel A. Green, its librarian, for many valuable suggestions and references. Among the latter I would specially mention the rare pamphlet on church music referred to on page 217, which is now in the Boston Public Library.

The extent to which I have relied on my uncle, Dr. George E. Ellis, for advice and guidance, can hardly be overestimated. It is sufficient to say that he has directed and supervised it all from beginning to end.

To my father, the present minister of the church, may be attributed an equal share with my uncle, of the labor involved in preparing the volume for the press, a work which was nearly completed during my absence abroad. In the preparation of the later chapters, I was guided and governed to a great extent by his advice.



I tender my grateful acknowledgments to Mrs. George W. Pratt, of Boston, for valuable aid in preparing the sketch of her ancestor, Thomas Bridge.

My thanks are due to Rev. Henry W. Foote, minister of King's Chapel, and author of a new history of that church, which he is now preparing for the press, for calling my attention to some interesting sermons of Foxcroft and for other acts of kindness; and to Mr. John Ward Dean, librarian of the New England Historic Genealogical Society, for kindly assisting me to fix the exact location of the first parsonage on Devonshire Street.

I am indebted to Dr. Charles Deane, of Cambridge, for the introduction of the titlepage of the rare copy of "Cotton's Milk for Babes," in connection with the life of Cotton; to D. Waldo Salisbury, Esq., of the Standing Committee of First Church, for the use of the ancient records of the church; and to George O. Harris, formerly clerk of the corporation, for assistance in preparing a statement of the cost of the new meeting-house.

Through the courtesy of Messrs. James R. Osgood & Co., I am permitted to insert excellent woodcuts of three of the ministers, viz., Cotton, Wadsworth, and Chauncy, with autographs of Cotton and Wadsworth, all of which are taken from the "Memorial History of Boston."

Similar attention on the part of the Committee of First Church who had in charge the publication of the memorial volume, enables me to add views of three of the meeting-houses, which were specially prepared for that work.

The likeness of Wilson is taken from a negative of a photograph (by Messrs. Allen & Rowell, of Boston) of a painting in the Massachusetts Historical Society Collections. (As to the authenticity of this portrait, which was at one time considered doubtful, see a satisfactory letter from Hon. Josiah Quincy to Hon. Robert C. Winthrop,



printed in Mass. Hist. Soc. Proceedings, December, 1880, showing it to have been in the possession of the Bromfield family for a great number of years.)

The engraving of Dr. Frothingham was prepared for the memoir of him by Dr. Hedge, referred to in the text.

Mr. A. B. Davenport, of Brooklyn, N. Y., kindly placed at my disposal the steel-plate engraving of John Davenport, which appears in his "History of the Davenport Family," as well as the fac-simile of his handwriting contained in the same volume.

Mr. Thomas Minns, of Boston, who has taken the most friendly interest in the work, generously gave the lithograph of the house of the Rev. John Wilson, taken from a sketch by Eliza Susan Quincy.

It was my intention at one time to unite the memorial volume already referred to, as published by a committee of the church, with this history, and bind them together. But as that work was issued some months before these pages were ready for the press, it seemed advisable to abandon this plan and make them as nearly as possible companion volumes. To the value of the memorial book as an historical treatise, the three sermons by the present minister, which it contains, form the chief contribution. No more trustworthy source of information concerning the early history of the church has ever been published. The Bi-centennial sermon of Dr. Frothingham is another valuable production in the same volume. It is recommended to all who desire to read an interesting chapter in the history of First Church.

A. B. E.



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INTRODUCTION.

"TO PRACTISE THE POSITIVE PART OF CHURCH REFORMATION AND PROPAGATE THE GOSPEL IN AMERICA ;"

THIS clearly defined and strongly worded statement, reiterated with variations of word and phrase in the writings of the leaders of the English Colonists in the Bay of Massachusetts, gives us from themselves the aim and purpose of their coming and their staying. The founders, ministers and members of the First Church in Boston stand as such leaders in the enterprise. They very soon had followers and associates in it. The relation of that First Church to the secular affairs of the colony, its, so to speak, metropolitan position, its establishment of a precedent and example for other early churches in this wilderness, and the pre-eminent influence and agency of its ministers in settling a form of church polity, make it proper, if not requisite, that a sketch of its history should be introduced by a brief reference to the intent and method of its constitution.

The writer of these introductory pages engages in this, not altogether attractive, effort in part through an interest in the subject, quickened by the recent celebration of the two-hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the planting of the church, and in part at the request of his brother, the pres-



ent pastor, and that of his nephew, its historian. In what is to follow the writer would frankly and distinctly state that he is not assuming the advocacy, the championship, or the defence of a religious fellowship or system, but simply aiming at its truthful historical statement. He is not the eulogist or the apologist of the Puritan theory. There was such a theory put on trial here. There was a purpose and a method in it. The founders of the First Church in Boston represent to us conspicuously the practical working of that theory. And thus a fair exposition of it may appropriately introduce the history of their church.

We have to ask what these Puritan church founders meant by "the Positive Part of Church Reformation;" and then, taking their own answer to the question, to follow out their purpose and method in attempting to realize their object. Nothing new can be suggested on this well-wrought theme of history and controversy. It has become dull and wearisome even to those who by lineage and heritage might seem most interested to keep it fresh and vitalized; while to those of uninformed or inert minds—who none the less are ready to speak judgments and opinions upon it—it is consigned to the class of themes which are antiquated and unprofitable. One who in the course of his own historical studies has sought to acquaint himself with facts and events necessary towards forming an intelligent and candid judgment on subjects once kindled and glowing with intense religious zeal and passion, but from which all the heat and all the practical interest are extinct for the living generation, will hardly fail to put to himself the question which others, superficial or indifferent in their own views, will be ready enough to ask him,—Why attempt to review, to restate, to set right, matters into which ignorance, superstition, morbid scruples, intolerance,



and passion entered so largely, and which are now all happily passing into oblivion? This question is thought to have a special pertinency when asked by multitudes living on this old Puritan heritage, in reference to any rehearsal of the stiff, stern, and bigoted ways of the founders of Church and Commonwealth. We are glad to succeed to them and to enjoy their heritage, but we cannot be engaged by any real and genial interest in their harsh and self-inflicting style of piety.

Living under the relaxed discipline, the easy freedom, the indifference and lack of earnestness in what was to our fathers the most intensely engrossing concern of their existence, even those among us who profess to retain, in substance at least, their religious standards and believings, fall far short of making real to us their old exemplars. Reproach, ridicule, contempt, scorn, are the sentiments very often felt or avowed for the crabbed, intolerant, and self-righteous spirit and deeds of those religious zealots, some pages of whose history are here revived. It would not be a less difficult, though certainly a much pleasanter, task to undertake to teach a foreign language or skill in the game of chess to a dull pupil, than it is to inform some facile triflers who wonder that any reasonable person should concern himself with telling anew, with an intent to rectify or readjust the judgment of time and common sense, the story of the stern religionists settling on the shores of Massachusetts Bay. We have repudiated their bigotry and austerity. Why plead even for their sincerity? There are those who are wholly unconscious of the fact that even the privileges of freedom, indifference, and laxity which they themselves enjoy, have come to them without cost, as an inheritance from the stern sincerity, the conflicts, the heroism, of those who thus enfranchised their posterity. There are those among us of the sturdiest Protestant lin-



eage, whose taste, conscience, love of religious repose or rest, has drawn them into the fold of the old Roman communion, where they find relief and joy. They are free to make the change, which involves no penalty or sacrifice. This freedom was won for them by predecessors of sterner stuff, who, in securing the right of private judgment which they used for themselves in breaking the thralldom of the old priestcraft, left others free to use the right as they might please, even if it should be to misuse it or to renounce its exercise.

The founders of the First Church of Boston derived their Christian nurture and heritage from the Church in England. On leaving their native land, with yearning hearts and tearful eyes, they took a tender parting from it on the deck of their vessel, as they were to give up its wonted holy places and worship for their "poor cottages in the wilderness." They were free to renew and perpetuate on the virgin soil of this continent the characteristic principles and usages of that mother church. They did not do so. They established quite another institution, polity, and discipline. Their own course of action, the surprise, the seeming inconsistency, and the reason of it, will appear by and by, after the way is prepared for their own explanation of it.

The English Church, as the religious nurse and mother of these Colonists, claimed to be a reformed church, purified, reconstructed, after renouncing and divesting itself, in constitution, doctrine, and discipline, of some of the inventions, corruptions, and superstitions of the Church of Rome. The English Church had made common cause with Protestant churches on the continent of Europe in this work of reformation, but had fallen back on its own special limitations. It had been for the English monarchs and parliaments to decide the steps, stages, degree, and



substance of this reforming work, holding always to the assurance that no process or amount or result of their renunciation of Romanism impaired one whit their relation to the true Church of Christ.

The Puritans believed, thoroughly and sincerely, that the process of reformation in the English Church had been arbitrarily arrested by statecraft and priestcraft, by aims of policy and by compromising. They found it retaining and enforcing some Roman inventions and corruptions — hierarchical, sacerdotal, and ceremonial — which consistency required should be renounced as of essentially the same erroneous, mischievous, and unscriptural character as others which had been thrown aside. “Rags and remnants of Popery” were as odious to the Puritans as the most elaborate inventions of its costume and ritual. They thought that at the stage which the reformation work had reached, and at the point where it was arbitrarily required to stop, it was neither thorough in its process nor secure of abiding without risk of reversion and overthrow. They had stern facts before them, and reasonable apprehensions to warrant this conviction. There was that in the temper, the treacherous State policy, the arbitrariness and inconstancy of the four Stuart kings, — there was much in the spirit of prelacy, in the inclinations of some of the nobility, and in the lingering attachments of some of the people for the fond devices of Romanism, which kept the great issues of Protestantism in an even balance of suspense and risk for a good part of the century stirred by aggressive Puritanism. Not for more than half a century after the Boston Church was planted was the realm of England solemnly and safely committed, by organic parliamentary enactment and by a sincere royal oath, to Protestantism. To make sure of the stage which the purifying work had already reached, and to advance it in consistency with



its first impulse and principles, was the aim of the Puritans.

It certainly was a serious and by no means easy problem for civil rulers and for ministers of religion, with their combined wisdom, to reconstruct a reformed church, after repudiating and renouncing that of Rome. The Church of Christ was to be the substitute for the Church of the Papacy. It was not strange that while the process of that substitution was advancing there should have been reason and occasion for much variance of judgment as to several matters of ecclesiastical constitution and discipline, — whether they belonged to, or at least were consistent with, the true Church of Christ, or were a part of the Papal system. Here we must recognize the radical difference in the matter of controversy maintained by the Puritans in the English Church, and that of the Reformed churches in general with the Church of Rome. The Puritans held their own English Church to the obligation of reconstructing itself strictly according to the rule and authority of the Scriptures. In theory this obligation had been recognized. But in practice there was inconstancy in purpose, and, as the Puritans believed, inconsistency, and a dangerous trifling with some of the old Papal inventions. The Papal Church stoutly denied the sole authority of the Scriptures and the obligation to adduce written rules for its constitution and discipline.

The Holy Apostolic Church, said the Romanists, existed and was fully organized, according to the direction of its Founder, and by authority conferred by him, before the Scriptures were written, and independently of what may or may not happen to be found in them for instruction or example. The Scriptures are in fact the free gift of the church to those who belong to its fold, — one of many helps and agencies in which, in the exercise of its



divine trust, it seeks to fulfil its work. The church settled the canon of the sacred writings, and has taken care that they should be safely transmitted through the ages for the blessing of the faithful, for whom also the church claims the right to interpret the Scriptures. But the church is by no means held to restrict itself, in every element of its constitution, government, and discipline, to what may be laid down or set forth in Scripture. The Apostles had verbal, unwritten instructions from Christ, which they communicated to their successors. These instructions were actually followed in the planting and government of the first Christian communion; they appeared in practical observance, in traditional transmission, and in various usages, rules, ceremonies, and methods of discipline, which all have thus an apostolic authority, are the marks and witnesses of the true church, wholly extraneous to what may appear in the sacred writings.

It is easy to conceive that, starting with this theory of a universal, apostolical church, bearing the sanction of its divine Founder, there might have been planted in this world an august and benedictive institution which would have gone far towards realizing for successive generations the establishment of the "Kingdom of Heaven" among men. But what, in contrast to this, the Roman Church became and was when its fearful thrall of despotism and superstition, its foul corruptions, and its debasing tyranny stirred alike the manhood and the piety of earnest souls to renounce it, need not here be related or portrayed.

In bursting the bonds of the papacy, and in renouncing all connection with the Roman Church, the Reformers in general recognized but one alternative for those who remained in discipleship of the Church of Christ: it was to find their rule and guidance in the Scriptures. If the New Testament Scriptures had indeed been the gift of the



church to Christ's disciples, the gift was bestowed while yet the church lived in its original simplicity and purity. The English Puritans asked of their dear mother church that she would strictly model herself by the simple rule of Scripture. They protested against the retention and the imposition by authority, in the constitution and discipline of their church, of any of the hierarchical, sacerdotal, or ceremonial inventions of the papacy. The ruling party in the English Church insisted that certain observances and usages which the Puritans disliked and repudiated were things "indifferent." The answer was, "Why then do you eject us from our vicarages, fine and imprison us for our scruples about them?" The Papal Church, in its elaborate hierarchy, had developed a system and series of priestly functionaries, with distinctions, ranks, privileges, and offices more numerous and complicated than are covered by all the officials of civil government, as running through all national and municipal departments and all the constituent parts of an army. The ritual, ceremonial, and altar service of the church, with its vestments, its ornaments, its attitudes and observances, was so intricate and complicated that only a glossary, or dictionary of terms and definitions, with something answering to "stage directions," could assign and interpret a meaning for them. To the Puritan they were all "mummeries."

The writer of these pages recalls a remembrance which, at the time, gave him a full sense of the old Puritan abhorrence of the Roman pomp and ceremonial in contrast with the simplicities of the early Christian worship. It was on Christmas day at the Church of St. Peter in Rome. With the blaze of thousands of candles at midday, the swinging of smoking censers, the array of religious orders in monkish hoods and varied garbs, the harlequin suits of the Swiss Guards, and other military escort, and crowds



of lay-people all in requisite dress-suits, the Pope, lifted in a canopy-covered golden chair, was borne in upon the arms of ecclesiastics. He was clad in robes so heavily wrought with gold that four bearers were needed to relieve their weight when he took a few steps on the pavements. He hardly needed the large fans and bunches of feathers from the tails of peacocks, borne before him, to remind him — as the explanation of the ceremonial is — that “the eyes of the people are upon him.” Probably it was the Puritan lineage of the writer, as he looked on the scene, that prompted the thought, that if the dome of the superb temple could have been riven, and the Apostle whose name it bears could have descended upon the scene, he would not have known what was going on there. It would certainly have been interesting to have listened as his “successor” explained the situation to him.

The Puritans, as we say, did not discriminate between what was part and parcel of a corrupt, overladen, pompous, sacerdotal ceremonialism, — the growth of centuries of a towering, domineering priesthood, enslaving the people by greed and superstition, — and certain harmless devices and adaptations still left in the English Church, which, though they could not claim positive Scripture sanction and apostolic precept, had in them fitness and grace, and might help to devout impression, order, and discipline. As the Puritans devoutly read the New Testament they learned from it that the Founder and Head of the Christian Church commissioned a company of men whom he had chosen, by themselves and their successors, to teach and preach to the world what he had taught them, — just that and no more. These teachers were called apostles, evangelists, ministers, elders, presbyters, overseers, bishops, — simply synonymous terms, without any gradations of office or dignity in rank, for they were



"all brethren." A company of men and women in any place, — Jews or Gentiles, — after listening to the teaching of the new religion, might gather together, and with a simple organization, under a competent, regular minister, — or, failing in that, edifying each other in exhortation and prayer, — might form a Christian church and administer its discipline. Some men of years and gravity, called deacons, had special oversight over the poor and the work of charity. The Puritans found nothing relating to "clerical habits or vestments," to a form of prayer and service, to an observance of the Lord's Supper as a commemorative rite by kneeling as in adoration at an altar, or to the drawing of a cross on the brow of an infant in baptism. The point must in fairness be granted that if the field and matter of variance between the Puritans and the prelacy and ceremonial of the Church of England were restricted to the New Testament, the Puritans could hold their ground. Able and candid prelates and scholars of the English Church have frankly admitted that it must look outside of the writings of the apostolic age for its full hierarchical and ceremonial system, and they plead for its right to do so.

With such a meaning and purpose attaching in their minds to the "Positive Part of Church Reformation," we trace the course pursued in the institution and discipline of the First Church in Boston. Its founders adopted, as by spontaneous prompting; the Congregational Polity, simply and for no other reason than because it represented to them the precedent laid down for them in the New Testament. They were constant readers and students of the sacred writings, and it was of supreme interest for them that no counsel or example there set forth should rebuke them for any willing neglect of it. The circumstances of their distant exile, their lack of all the paraphernalia and



furnishings of ecclesiastical ceremonial, and their straits of necessity, might well have excused their disuse of wonted observances, and their recourse to any shifts of their own devising. But they sought no excuse, they offered no apologies for the course which they pursued. They had a fair, free field for the full trial of methods and the exercise of conscientious principles which, before their exile, had profoundly engaged their convictions. Puritanism had exhibited in England its animating spirit, and had indicated its own direction and ideals. These had been impeded and withstood in their development, and in the effort to realize them. Here they were free to assert themselves, and they did so. The result was that the First Church of Boston, the exemplar in this matter of all the early New England churches, became a Congregational Church. Its polity, widely at variance with that of the English Church, is substantially that of sects and communions which vastly outnumber the discipleship of the English Church on both continents, and still fairly divide it in Great Britain itself.

Just at this point, in the first acts that initiated the New England Congregational Church polity, we have presented to us a question which, whether it be regarded as reflecting severely upon the alleged inconsistency and insincerity of the Boston Puritans, or as merely involving an interesting historical fact, may engage our attention.

The question is, How does the openly schismatic course pursued by the founders of the First Church, in their immediate and complete repudiation of the ecclesiastical methods of the Church of England, consist with the avowed and tender love, gratitude, affection, and yearning regard which they had expressed for it on leaving their native land? Here are some sentences from this parting address to the "Reverend Fathers and Brethren": "We desire



you would be pleased to take notice of the principals and body of our Company, as those who esteem it our honour to call the Church of England, from whence we rise, our dear mother; and cannot part from our native Country, where she specially resideth, without much sadness of heart and many tears in our eyes, ever acknowledging that such hope and part as we have obtained in the common salvation we have received in her bosom, and sucked it from her breasts. We leave it not, therefore, as loathing that milk wherewith we were nourished there; but, blessing God for the parentage and education, as members of the same body, shall always rejoice in her good," etc.

These tender parting words were evidently the promptings of a deep heart-sincerity. No motive other than the purest and the truest could have drawn them forth. There was a degree of magnanimity, too, in the utterance of them. Some of the exiles had felt the harsh dealing of the prelates and the spiritual courts of the Church of England. Much as they had owed to it, and much as they loved it, they were parting from it of their own free-will, in search of some Christian joys and privileges which they could not find in its communion. Still, the question is a pertinent one,—How could they at once thus actually rend the tie of fellowship with that church by disusing all its forms in institution and observance, and invent or establish their own widely different polity?

In dealing with this question, the matter of most significance for us is that we have not a single word of explanation, much less of justification, coming from themselves as to the course which they pursued. This is the more remarkable as it was their most characteristic habit, their unvarying usage and principle, to debate, to discuss, to deliberately and patiently weigh, every proposition, scheme,



and incidental measure involved in their enterprise. They always had recourse to "papers" to mark the stages of that enterprise, and to note all its details and incidents. The "brethren" had equal and common part with the ministers in the laying of plans, the consultations over everything however trifling which concerned their religious or secular interests, and nothing but Scripture arguments ever had weight with them. From these facts we might infer that such vitally interesting matters as related to the institution of a church body, the methods of organization and discipline, and the conduct of public worship, were deliberately considered and discussed by them, and that any new or unwonted practices which they might adopt, would have been the topics of earnest conference in the religious meetings which were of such interest to them. But if any such papers were written, if any such debates were held, they have fallen into entire oblivion. If they had foreseen that their farewell letter would be quoted as testimony against them, they might have been at the pains to have left some record for their justification. In lack of it, their church polity seems to us to have been adopted spontaneously, with no dissent or objection, as if they regarded it as their natural and rightful privilege, when free, to follow a previous inclination and tendency.

In a very interesting communication read before the Massachusetts Historical Society, January, 1881, by its President, Hon. Robert C. Winthrop (see published Proceedings of that date), appears the following, dealing directly with this very interesting question.

"It has sometimes been inquired of me personally, how it was to be explained that Governor Winthrop, who had not only signed that farewell letter officially, and, as I think, written it himself, but had long been the patron of the little church at Groton, and presented to its living, should have made no reference to the Church



of England on coming here, but should have united without delay in the organization of a church of an entirely different form of worship and of a wholly independent character."

In dealing with this very pertinent and significant question, Mr. Winthrop does not essay to reduce or qualify, in any degree, the fact that the honored Governor was a party to, and a conspicuous leader in, this immediate recognition and establishment of the Congregational polity. Nor does he feel called upon to explain the course of his ancestor in so doing, still less to vindicate his consistency. He refers to the loss of papers which might possibly throw light upon this exceedingly interesting and critical incident in the first religious arrangements of the exiles. Assuming, as he very justly might, that so grave a proceeding, as has been above intimated, could hardly have engaged the common sympathy and action of all concerned in it, without some preliminary consideration and joint understanding, Mr. Winthrop infers that the transaction may have been explained in those lost papers. He quotes, from some of the extant letters of the Governor, references to certain other letters to his brother-in-law Downing and others, that have not been recovered. These references, however, so far as they intimate the subjects of the lost papers, are to a journal, a "Relation" of the voyage, and certain business of the Plantation. The papers might well indeed have contained particulars relating to the entrance upon church institution, other than those which we have in Winthrop's printed journal, copied in the history given in the pages of this book in their proper places. But so far as the references to the contents of these lost papers make mention of their subjects or topics, not the slightest hint is given of any deliberation on their church affairs, or any allusion to the occasion or reason of their spontaneous adoption of a preferred polity. It may be suggested, likewise, that we



should hardly look to private letters for an explanation of transactions of so public and general concern as would lead us to seek for recognition of them on the pages of records where less important matters are fully entered.

Here then were professed members of the Church of England organized and worshipping after another "pattern" than hers. Without any undue pressure of an argument that might be invalidated if we had certain information which is lacking to us, we are left to recognize, in its full and unrelieved force, the fact that these former communicants of the Church of England, who had recently so tenderly apostrophized it, seem spontaneously, we may even say abruptly, without protest on the part of any one, and though without any known preconcert of action, yet as if with skill and ready adaptation, proceeded to do what Mr. R. C. Winthrop has so well described, "organize a church of an entirely different form of worship, and of a wholly independent character." Worship by the Book of Common Prayer, responsive services, reading of set Scripture lessons, priestly vestments, the altar-rail for the communion, the repetition of the creeds, the bowing at the name of Jesus, — are all set aside, and that too without explanation or apology for their disuse. Several of the early ministers of the Church had indeed received Episcopal ordination; but this was looked upon indifferently, neither as an advantage nor a disqualification; and when the Church, in a later period, was instituting, in the succession of its pastors, one who had not received such ordination, the fact does not appear to have been regarded as of sufficient consequence to have been recognized on the records. From that day to this, the First Church, with its succession of seventeen ministers, through its two and a half centuries has set them in office with substantially the same simplicity of method, elder and brother



ministers recognizing their accession to office according to Scripture direction : —

“The things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.” — 2 *Tim.* ii. 2.

Two suggestions may here be offered to relieve, if it be worth the while, the abruptness and surprise to us of what seemed so spontaneous and harmonious to themselves in the institution of their church : —

First, they availed themselves of opportunity, place, and means to put in practice, without any hinderance, convictions, tendencies, principles, and methods which had previously engaged their wishes and their consciences. The practices which they disused were precisely those which, in their English home and church worship, they had disliked, objected to, and, so far as it was convenient or safe to do so, had reluctantly conformed to or even abandoned. Something very like to the mode of worship and religious fellowship in the First Church of Boston had frequently been anticipated in the old English homes and conventicles of the Puritans in their meetings for prayer and conference ; so we cannot but note how naturally they assumed and fell in with a method which had already become dear to them.

Second, a more important suggestion, as bearing upon their consistency in the course which they pursued, is this : They evidently did not feel that they thus sundered the tie which held them to the Church of England in the only character and quality for which they would love or honor it, as representing to them the Church of Christ. In other words, they did not regard such institutional and ceremonial and other adventitious usages of their mother church as they had protested against at home and dis-



used when they came here, as being essentially and vitally wrought into her identity as Christian.

It would be irrelevant to discuss here the history of the struggle which has now run through centuries between the ecclesiastical and the distinctively Christian elements combined in the English Church. It has always had a representation of parties standing respectively for ritual and doctrine. A curious and almost ludicrous illustration of the popular fancy by which a single form or usage identified with the Episcopal Church has come to stand as a symbol for the whole system, has been made familiar to us when, in some other denominational churches, the introduction of chants, of read prayers, or responses in service, has been met by the amazed question, "Are you becoming Episcopal?" If we owe to the Puritans the standing for the grand position that the English Church might still be the Church of Christ while disusing or leaving optional every form and exaction with which in conscience they could not comply, we may well confess their claim upon our respect. What other than this is the ground on which the late beloved and revered Dean Stanley based the comprehensiveness of his ideal Church of England?

There were in the realm of England, at the time of the exile here, avowed and resolute Separatists from the Church who would not on any terms hold communion with it, and whose judgments against it were bitter and denunciatory. The founders of the First Church took pains to distinguish themselves, in feeling and spirit at least, from these Separatists. They called themselves Non-conformists. Till Archbishop Laud and other "Romanizing" prelates widened the breach and exasperated the alienations between themselves and the Puritans, there was ever an open prospect of conciliation, which was often again re-



newed in later times. The exiles here wished that those in sympathy with them who remained at home should be a tie of a still existing fellowship between themselves and the mother church. Roger Williams tells us that he refused to accept an invitation to become the teacher of the First Church because its members would not repudiate their former communion with the Church of England. And its members also declined to censure any of their number who, on revisiting England, renewed their communion. The inference seems to be clear. The exiles did not regard those fortuitous elements in the order and discipline of the Church of England against which they had objected, and with which they had more or less failed to conform while they remained in its communion at home, and which they wholly disused here, as at all essential to the validity of its existence and identity as the Church of Christ. They believed that a further cleansing of its ritual and ceremonial, while making it less Roman, would leave it the more Christian. If this is a fair construction of the attitude in which the Boston Puritans placed themselves towards their mother church, it would seem that in their time, however it may be in our own, their course could be censured as inconsistent and schismatic only by ascribing to the ecclesiastical authorities at home the assumption that certain sacerdotal and ritual injunctions were of equal importance with the vitalities and sanctities of the Christian religion, as identifying the Church of Christ.

The positive and absolute rejection by those covenanted in the membership of the First Boston Church of the whole theory and practice of prelacy and the old ecclesiastical system, of course compelled them to adopt a substitute authority and method for such institution as their loyalty to Christ and his Gospel made essential to their fellowship in instruction, worship, and communion. If we



would fully understand and fairly appreciate the course which they pursued in their Congregational polity, we must recognize the thorough sincerity and conscientiousness which guided them. It was not by the leadings of their self-will or by the exercise of their own ingenuity that they undertook their reconstructive work. They had the material and the plan for it which to them were of divine furnishing. They were to follow a "pattern" answering in the Christian dispensation to that of Moses in the Jewish. The New Testament Scriptures, supreme in their authority, were sufficient for them. The conscious intrusion, adoption, or exercise of any fancy, device, or adaptation of their own, to help out any supposed lack of scriptural direction in any important matter, would have shocked them as an impiety. There was, indeed, an assumption involved in the course pursued by them, a taking for granted of a fundamental position, which, as has been already noted, was not then cleared of controversy, and which has ever since remained open for variance and discussion. Their assumption was that they would find in the New Testament Scriptures the rule and direction for everything essential and allowable for the organization, administration, and discipline of local Christian churches. In this assumption they set wholly aside the fundamental theory of the ecclesiastical system of the Roman, and to a qualified degree, of the English Church, of certain apostolical authority transmitted through oral directions, traditions, institutions, usages, and sacerdotal sanctions, which was co-ordinate with, if not paramount to, the partial and incomplete instructions given in the Scriptures. The English Church recognized something of this traditional and institutional authority external to the New Testament Scriptures, but relied upon a vague and arbitrary limitation of it, as to the period of time, the matters of institution and



discipline and the ecclesiastical practices which it might cover, on the assumption that if we had not explicit scriptural sanctions for them, "primitive" usage warranted the belief that they had the sanction of the Apostles. The Puritans stoutly refused to allow that the Scriptures were thus incomplete and insufficient. They might well have been reminded, when they relied so confidently upon hints and counsels gathered from the Epistles in the New Testament, that those letters were not addressed to the Church at large, but to local communities, as at Rome, Ephesus, Colosse, Thessalonica, and that each of them implied previous supplementary and oral instruction and direct oversight from the Apostles who had founded and visited them; so that the reading of those letters at a long distance of time and by strangers would present some of the same embarrassments which one would meet in perusing a letter from the post-office not addressed to himself, and relating wholly to another person's affairs.

Still nothing but Scripture and nothing beside Scripture had authority for the Puritans in instituting and disposing their church polity. Every element of the ecclesiastical, sacerdotal, and ceremonial system which had been wrought in with faith and observance was subjected to the Scripture test, and if not fortified there, it was rejected. For every principle, injunction, and usage adopted in their system they were ready to produce a Scripture warrant. Any one who has dutifully though wearily read over but a portion of the pages of their manifold little tractates, or of their folio "bodies of divinity," can but stand amazed at the keen-sightedness, the ingenuity, the acuteness, the marvellous industry with which they "searched the Scriptures" for precedents, for guidance, for answers to objections, and for arguments. The Puritans insisted that all priestly functions for Christians to recognize centred in Jesus



Christ alone. All assumptions of sacerdotal powers, in ordination, in administration, in hearing confessions and in granting absolution by those who were simply ministers, teachers, were trespasses upon the prerogatives of the one only Chief Priest, Jesus Christ. Keenly and closely was the claim contested against prelacy, that one class of superior clergy, descending in a direct apostolic line, had exclusive authority to ordain and commission other clergy, to whom, by "laying on of hands," they conveyed "the gift of the Holy Ghost," which God alone could impart. They read that the chief of the Apostles, Paul, "called by God" to his high work, kept himself aloof from the other Apostles, as if jealous of depending upon their recognition. And as to his ordination by the "laying on of hands," instead of looking to either of the other Apostles for this service, the Puritans read that whatever its significance, the office was discharged by one who is described as "a certain disciple at Damascus, named Ananias" (Acts ix. 10, 17). And again, when Barnabas and Paul were to be "separated" for a special work, the ceremony was performed by "the laying on hands," not of the Apostles, but of "certain prophets and teachers at Antioch" (Acts xiii. 1, 3). The Saviour had likened the preaching of his gospel to the sowing of seed. Its growth and fertility depended upon its own vitality and upon the nature of the soil which received it, not at all upon a form answering to ordination, which should qualify a particular class of husbandmen to sow the seed. The Puritan did recognize the propriety and dignity of formally greeting the accession of each new candidate in the line of the ministry to the fellowship of his brethren. His qualifications of mind, character, and spirit were believed to come from God alone. "The laying on of hands by the presbytery" was the respectful act of confidence and sympathy by which his elders, of proved experience



and esteem in their holy calling, received him to a common ministry.

Very dear to these old Puritans was the privilege of choosing and instituting their own religious teacher, and of regarding him as one of the brethren in their church fold. Among the disapproved usages of their mother church was the one which they thus repudiated, by which "the lord of the manor" or the "patron of a living" was allowed to "present" an incumbent or a vicar, who might be a man of corrupt character, ignorant, incompetent, and immoral, but over whose tenure of office his unwilling parishioners had no power.

It will be observed that in the extracts made from the records of the church, in connection with the pastorates of the successive ministers, distinct notice is taken of the number of baptisms, and of those admitted to partake of the Lord's Supper as members in full communion. Though in the course of years and in the gradual changes of opinion and belief, the relative importance of these especial tests of the fidelity of the ministers and the sympathetic response of the people was largely reduced, yet those lists of the baptized and the covenanted were among the most significant entries on the record of the first Puritan churches. This suggests a statement on which, as an historical point, it would be difficult to lay undue stress. Among the most distinctive elements of the Puritan Church polity, as departing from that of the English Church, was one which was vastly more efficient in its practical working than was even the rejection of prelacy and the disuse of the ritual ceremonial in worship. It was the Puritan view of the intent, and the proper subjects of the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper. A stern fidelity to their own convictions and to what they believed to be the scriptural doctrine concerning these ordinances was in fact the occasion, after



full trial and experiment, of some of their most serious annoyances and difficulties. Their attempt to enforce a rigid adherence to their early rule in the administration of the sacraments, taken in connection with the provision that only church members could exercise the civil franchise, was in fact the leading cause of the discomfiture of the Puritan polity in Church and State. All the more just, therefore, is it that we should clearly apprehend the grounds of their radical and intense alienation from the old church usages in the sacraments, and of their earnest and tenacious preference of their own till experience had exposed their impracticable and indeed alarming results.

In the English Church the rite of baptism was freely administered to every new-born infant. What might in exceptional cases be an assurance and aid of the subsequent Christian nurture of the baptized child, but what in the vast majority of cases was necessarily a perfectly futile and empty pretence, was the provision of "godparents," or sponsors, to represent, to reinforce, or to be a substitute for the parental care and duty for a child admitted to the Christian fold. The formal, perfunctory, and often perfectly heartless way in which this ceremonial was performed, entailing in practice no consequent obligations, did not need to be viewed with the keenest Puritan scruples to show itself as a painful mockery of a real solemnity. Then at any time after the age of early childhood, the baptized boy or girl, after some preparatory catechetical instruction, which might or might not have engaged heart or conscience, was, by "confirmation, when the bishop made his visit," received into full communion of the church, with the privilege of partaking of the Lord's Supper, henceforward a Christian for life and death, to be buried in assured hope of a blissful immortality.

If these easy terms of securing membership of the Chris-



tian fold, with an implied pledge of salvation, had not been sufficient of themselves to engage the protest of the Puritans, pleading for a more thorough reformation of Romish practices in the English Church, the lightness, formality, and promiscuous method of the observances, and the indifference, heedlessness, and laxity with which solemn sacraments, "the seals of a holy covenant," were administered to persons of a notoriously corrupt life and "unregenerate," were of a character to shock them. There was not only an indulgent liberty, but a compulsory requisition connected with the observance of these ordinances, which the Puritans believed to be an irreligious, indeed, a scandalous offence. They were well aware that men of deep shades of impiety and without concealment of their vices, as a condition of place, privilege, or office, knelt at the altar rail unabashed in manner and seemingly with untroubled consciences. Far more effort and discipline were enforced in the English Church in exacting a regular observance of the ordinances than in testing the fitness of partakers in them.

The two sacraments were to the Puritan "seals of the covenant," of the most precious, solemn, and awe-inspiring character. One who, from these remote years and amid these changed surroundings, could be carried backward to stand as an observer of either of the Christian rites in the first wilderness church here, would have witnessed the working of emotions and convictions which it is more than difficult to realize now. The form of the rites stood for little, if for anything, with the Puritan. Any mummery, costume, attitude, or pretence of magical efficacy connected with them, the sign of the cross, or the putting words into the mouth of an infant by a proxy, was odious to them. The parent was to be the one to renounce the devil and all the sinful vanities of the world for the child's



sake. The Puritan would not lay the baptismal water upon the brow of an infant unless both the parents had been previously pledged, by their own vows, to keep it in the fold of Christ. Instead of godparents the whole fellowship of the church were to share with father and mother in all-loving covenant fidelity in the nurture of the child. At any after age till its death, an open account was kept with and for that child on the church book. Yet it was only so far a Christian as privilege, expectation, and obligation prepared the way for a renewal of the covenant by coming to the Lord's table. That table, the Supper of the Lord, was guarded in the approach to it, and in the relations of watch and ward into which partakers of it were brought with each other, as of the utmost sanctity. The Puritans very soon gave over the intense zeal with which, at an early stage of the Reformation, they contended against the Roman doctrine of transubstantiation. The faith of the Romanist required that in the holy wafer he should receive, through his lips, a portion of the real body of the Lord. The Puritan was concerned that the saving grace of Christ should be livingly appropriated by his heart. It was his aim and solemn purpose that in every assembly gathered for Christian worship, instruction, and edification, and testifying so far, by their presence and support of religious observances, that they had some regard for sacred things, there should be an elect fellowship of such men and women as had been individually and solemnly pledged and covenanted to a Christian testimony and discipleship. Such was the membership, by individual conversion, by regenerating experience, and by solemn personal vows, of the local churches of Christ, as related in the Acts of the Apostles and the Epistles of the New Testament. Churches were to be constituted of "saints"; that was the Puritan belief. But how was the

assurance of saintship to be reached and certified? What were its tests, and who were to be judges of its reality? The Puritans found their guidance on this matter, where alone they looked for it, in the pregnant examples of the offering of candidates and the initiation of individual men and women into church fellowship under the Apostles. We have read of certain secret societies, from the Middle Ages downward, — of templars, craftsmen, revolutionists, nihilists, and others, — in which, at the initiation of members, in hidden resorts, at midnight hours, some horrifying or blood-curdling rites of ceremony, with oaths and imprecations, have been engaged to strike terror and to secure fidelity. Bating all that was dramatic, uncanny, or impious in these initiatory rites, one may safely affirm that their power over the feelings of candidates, their searching inquiry into motives, purposes, and resolves, did not exceed that of the Puritan ordeal in receiving to church communion new members as regenerate and sealed witnesses for Christ and heirs of his salvation. Instead of seeking the shadow of secrecy or withdrawal from public gaze and scrutiny, the Puritan process, which was too bare and severe to be called a ceremony, sought the most free and open observance. The candidate, previous and up to the moment of admission, was one of a mixed and miscellaneous congregation. Before that congregation, in connection with an occasion for public worship, the man or woman who sought to be received into the elect fold rose when called up by name. The momentous and perfectly voluntary character of the transaction was safely relied upon to deprive it of all ostentation, to insure modesty and propriety, and to furnish audible and fit speech even to the most shrinking in delicacy or reserve. Then, in the phrase of the time, testimony was given by the candidate to a certain experimental and converting work of the Holy Spirit upon heart



and conscience, with searching exercises, with compunctions, conflicts, rebukings, and penitential motions,—the disclosed history of a soul and life under God's hand, and the expression of a humble hope, after a passage through a dark way, of having attained through trembling and weakness to a joyful light. Any one in the whole congregation, listening to this testimony, not only had the liberty, but as of right and duty was expected to use the privilege, of challenging the candidate, of exposing any blemish, infirmity, or inconsistency in the character or "walk" of the candidate, any bad habit, any unconfessed error, any manifestation of spirit, in public or in private, which made the claimant for church membership unworthy of full confidence. The ordeal must have been most severe and painful to many, whether only from diffidence or tenderness of conscience. Jealousies, grudges, suspicions, and alienations between persons whose whole daily lives and intercourse were so open to eye and tongue, had a free range for their exercise. Only the consciousness of seriousness and sincerity of purpose would seem to have fortified a candidate, man or woman, to meet that ordeal. The exaction of it must at least certify to us the lofty standard and aim of the Puritan style of piety. The whole method and process by which church membership was thus guarded and attained among them, are subject, in our retrospective judgment at least, to the drawback and suspicion that, while even hypocrites and self-seekers might pass the ordeal, in the condition that the civil franchise was made dependent for men upon this church relation, there would always be room for distrust as to perfect singleness of purpose. We know as an undisputed fact that this union of church and civil privilege wrought mischievous consequences in two directions. It kept out of coveted religious fellowship many scrupulous, conscientious, and diffident



persons who could not sincerely, or who would not, disclose the privacies of their religious experience in a way to satisfy the requisitions of the case; and it admitted some to full standing whose verbal professions and pledges were all too easy terms for securing civil rights.

The austere and watchful guardians over the purity of their church fold, well aware of the risks of shortcoming and of the lapse from covenant vows which might follow after the supposed crisis in the religious life had been reached, fortified themselves as well as they might against them. The method by which a candidate was admitted to the church, exacting as it was, was but the initiatory step in a continuous and keenly intrusive oversight and scrutiny which were thenceforward brought to bear upon each member, as to the tenor of his life and the constancy and fervor of his piety. The members were pledged in covenant to mutual "watch and ward," to help each other, alike by sympathy and encouragement and by inquisition and rebuke, to full fidelity.

The records of the early New England churches — those of the First Church of Boston, however, not being so largely and in detail marked as are those of many of its sister churches for such entries — afford abundant evidence of the fidelity, at least, with which church "discipline" was enforced. Such contents on these records are fitly left where they are, perhaps in the interests of historical fidelity claiming a right to be preserved in manuscript, but with no warrant to be reproduced in print. They certify the fact that if that Puritan age with all its austerity was troubled and stained by scandalous tokens of the infirmities and vices of human nature, there were some who were so confident and stable in their own integrity as not to shrink from throwing stones at bold offenders. We may marvel at the disregard of all delicate sensibility, and the



risks of corrupting those who were still unconscious of some evil ways, in the method of Puritan discipline, when before a whole listening congregation men and women were compelled to expose and confess their grievous lapses from decorum and morality. Nor will all be ready to admit that the sternness and unrelenting pressure of the inquisitors, or the awe-stricken horror of the auditors, indicated any unfamiliar yielding of the culprit to the adversary of souls. But we have to recognize a fidelity to an accepted standard. And who that is well informed in the case will venture to deny that these severe methods of church discipline, with the disrepute and the penalties which attended them, indicated a general conformity, in social and neighborly relations, in domestic life, and in private individual habits, to rules of virtue, to responsibilities of example, and to precious safeguards which help to keep pure the springs of human life? Though, as has been said, the records of the First Church do not relatively contain so much matter of the sort that has been referred to, as do those of many of its sister churches, there are in them entries sufficient in number and in tenor to expose to us the fidelity with which covenant relations were enforced and exacted, and with which breaches of them, private or public, were visited. The charging of excessive prices for needful commodities; the use of intemperate speech, reproaching, scolding, and profanity; the neglect of family worship or discipline, or of the due catechising of children; irregular attendance at worship or the ordinances; excesses of apparel or luxurious living,—such as these are what we should call the minor and less flagrant occasions of church discipline, in open congregation, for the sake of warning the listening flock. Of the graver offences, more or less scandalous, no mention need be made. The penalties were, a free confession of failings, apologies and proffers of satisfaction to the



aggrieved, admonition, and, in extreme cases, excommunication. Nor can we fail to remark on these records, not only on occasion a spirit of gentleness and forbearance, but also the lack of any token of vengefulness or cruelty. An easy and kindly way was always left open for the recovery and restoration to full communion of the most grievous culprits, on their solicitation and full avowal of repentance and renewed purposes of fidelity. Indeed, in turning over these records a reader will hardly fail of an occasional hesitation as to whether some very grievous offender—for instance, like the sly, but serviceable Captain Underhill—did not dupe his grave brethren—Winthrop among them—with an unctuous self-humiliation.

The Puritan estimate and observance of the Sabbath, or Lord's day, are to be regarded in connection with their disesteem and rejection of all the other occasions on the church calendar for public religious offices. They combined the Jewish and the Christian one day in seven in their devout regard, not believing that the substitution and consecration of the latter at all impaired the obligation or sanctity of the mode of observance of the former. It was but a change of days, not a reduction of authority or a diminution of observance. The sanctification of *a* Sabbath rather than of *the* Sabbath was for them a divine ordinance of world-wide and permanent obligation. They at once imposed it, so far as they could, even upon the wild Indians of these woods. They found it in the commandments anticipating the Jewish polity, which was instituted only for an age and a nation. They saw no reason for limiting or qualifying the command about the Sabbath any more than the command to commit no murder. And the commandment for the Sabbath had two clauses, the one enjoining that one day in the week should be consecrated to holy rest, while the other six days should be given to secular



duties and industry. They found the church calendar laden and crowded with holy days and holidays, — wholly without warrant or example in Scripture. A discriminating selection from them, if anything of devout, decorous, consistent, and edifying observance could have been connected with some of these days, might perhaps have conciliated the prejudices of the Puritans, as some of their descendants of this generation take kindly to two of these "church days," — Christmas and Easter. But the calendar as a whole could not claim their reverence, their respect, or even their tolerance. There were names upon it of doubtful sanctity. "Lying legends," frivolous fables, trivial, demoralizing, and even profane elements of superstition and grovelling credulity and imposition, had for ages been overlaying the simple historic Church of Christ. Pious frauds gave an immense power to those who were skilled in all the arts of priestcraft. Holy wells, roadside shrines, sham relics, beguiled the fond confidence of an ignorant and stolid peasantry, which was availed of for extorting from them no small portion of their frugal means. Priests claimed to have power over the destiny of the soul when it was passing from the body and after its release from mortality. More than all, the austerity and thorough sincerity of the Puritan standard of piety, in contrast with the easy laxness of the church system, found cause of grievous scandal in the utter inconsistency between the professed sanctity of the occasions of observance on the church calendar and the unseemly and demoralizing indulgences allowed upon them. "If you are commemorating a saint, or a sad or a grateful event in gospel history," said the Puritan, "let your doings and your rejoicings be in harmony with it. Your revels, mummeries, wassails, and jollities are but a mockery." By returns made to Parliament in the Puritan age, it appeared that all the jails and lock-ups of the king-

dom on the days following Christmas contained more victims of debauchery, rowdyism, and violence than at any other period of the year. This is the historical reason and warrant for the neglect of church days by the Puritans, while they compressed into their observance of the "Sabbath" enough of religious solemnity, instruction, and discipline to last till the next return of the day. Nor, as it has often been satirically and sharply charged against these Puritans, was there any inconsistency between their rejection of church days and their observance of Fasts and Thanksgivings of their own appointment. They found their full warrant for these, as for all their characteristic tenets and practices, in the Scriptures. Individuals, families, and groups of kindred in Puritan households consecrated Fasts and Thanksgivings on occasions of their own, when deep sorrows or gracious blessings came to them, as of Divine appointment. And in the united and public experiences of the Colonists, from their first year on the soil, there were alternations of visitation or relief which struck so deeply into their dread or gratitude that they could not but come together in their assembly to weep or to rejoice. When starvation stared upon them ; when the blight or the murrain, the drought or the tempest, the conflagration or the earthquake, the prowling savage, or the foreign enemy, or their own dissensions, struck dismay into all hearts, — what were they to do but to humble themselves in abstinence and prayer ? And when "seasonable showers," fair, full crops, and laden ingatherings displayed to them the bounty of Heaven, what could they do but make return in their prayers of thanksgiving and in the strains of their rude psalmody ? He would need to exercise a most candid and comprehensive judgment who should undertake to pronounce upon the general qualities of good or ill in the distinctive elements of Puritan observance, in household



life, in the training of the devotional sentiments, and in the guardianship of public morals. Certain it is that only their type of piety and morality was equal and fitted to their stern enterprise.

The full issue and outcome of the method of church institution, organization, and discipline initiated by the founders and members of the First Church in Boston, was what has since been called Congregationalism, as distinguished from the prelatical system. The fellowship here formed would have been far from claiming that there was any novelty in its method, or that in any single feature or principle of it, it would have the character of an untried experiment. They heartily and profoundly believed that they were reviving the original, apostolical, scriptural pattern of a Christian Church. Nor was it only here, or for the first time, that in the planting of the First Church in Boston there had been an intent of reverting to the original pattern of church institution. There had been many previous examples of it in Protestant countries on the continent of Europe, several in scattered, humble conventicles in England. And on this New England soil the same method had been substantially adopted ten years before by the fragment of the Leyden Church at Plymouth, one year before by the church in Salem, one month before by the church in Dorchester, and a church was instituted in Watertown on the same day as was that in Boston. The most full and emphatic recognition of what seemed to be novel principles of church institution was, however, made here. The conspicuous position of this Boston church, the influence and character of its members, and the eminent qualities of its first ministers, as has been said, gave it the lead as an example to be imitated, and makes it responsible, speaking in general terms, for the setting up and enforcing of Congregationalism as the New England church pol-



ity. The field was free for the experiment. Opportunity favored. The readiness and earnestness with which the opportunity was turned to account show how strong were the impelling motives to it, and how well prepared were those who engaged in it to insure success for the undertaking. And we should note with emphasis the very significant fact, that though it seemed to be among the prime essentials for the exercise of the zeal and ingenuity of the Puritans, to keep themselves constantly occupied and troubled about the incidental workings of their church system, they never manifested the slightest distrust or dissatisfaction with its fundamentals, or betrayed any backward lookings or longings toward sacerdotalism or ceremonialism. Their simple concern was to become more and more complete and consistent in their Congregationalism. How thoroughly the First and all the other early churches of Massachusetts, at least, had become weaned from the sacerdotalism and ritualism of their mother church, is manifest to-day in the characteristics of the heritage which they have left here. Notwithstanding all there is of grace and beauty, of dignity and devoutness, of adaptation and comprehensiveness, in the present Episcopal Church, the soil of Massachusetts and the qualities and habits of its native population have proved so utterly uncongenial with it, that there are at this time scarcely more than a score of flourishing parishes of that communion, free of debt and hard struggles, now in the limits of the State, while the majority of the rest, served by most devoted and earnest ministers, are missionary efforts.

It consists with the frame of spirit of some critics and historians in the Episcopal Church, when reviewing recent exponents of the Congregational polity, to ridicule it as a modern novelty, without three centuries of life, — a discovery and invention of quite recent date, compared with the



hoar antiquity of the church system. It is hard to believe that these gibes and sarcasms are characteristics of the ignorance rather than of the conceits of those who utter them. The Puritans were concerned to identify their system with only one stage of antiquity, and that one, as they fully believed, at least one generation back of the starting-point of the prelatical system. It may be stoutly affirmed that if ever an intelligent, scholarly, and earnest body of men, with profound religious purposes to move them, were engaged in any work in the results of which they found full satisfaction, such a work, and so endeavored, was that of the Puritans, when with patient study, singleness of aim, and persistent prayer, they sought to revive, to reconstruct, and then strictly in every feature and element to adopt, the mode of church institution and discipline which they found in the New Testament Scriptures as those of the first Christian disciples and assemblies.

Not the least among the grievances which the Puritans found in the exclusive and restrictive limitations within which the Church of England, as confessedly a reformed church cleansed from corruption, planted herself, was the reflection of disesteem and dishonor which she thus cast upon the other reformed churches on the continent of Europe. These also had sought to conform their constitution and discipline to the New Testament pattern. Whatever penalties or disabilities, incident to the rupture of the unity of the mediæval Church by the Reformation, they might have risked by having their lineage and descent in the ecclesiastical line cut off by disinheritance, they felt were fully compensated by their reversion to the original apostolic fold. In all the heats and passionate contentions and denunciations, the tempests and wars of the Reformation epoch, Martin Luther, with equal calmness and assurance, insisted that he belonged to the Holy Catholic



Apostolical Church, —leaving out the Roman, —and that neither Pope nor Council, Emperor nor Devil, should alienate or excommunicate him from it. Our first church exiles did not leave out the word "English," in their tender parting from the abode of their mother church. But the epithet certainly did not stand with them as a substitute for the word "Christian."

It was but natural that the prelatial party in the English Church should have been disposed to retain some of the elements and usages of the old system. They had a large amount of ecclesiastical materials left to them for which they would be disposed to find some use. Parliament had made over to them all the cathedrals and churches and abbeys, with architectural arrangements, ornaments, and symbols, designed for quite another form of administration and worship. The cathedrals have always been of very little use to the Church of England, except for "enthroning" bishops and for musical festivals, built and enriched with symbolic devices, as they were, for solemn throngs and processional array. The traveler from this country is always impressed with the striking contrast between the interiors of English and Continental cathedrals, —the former exhibiting large vacancy, the latter abounding with adorned altars, and paintings and statues. But the English temples had "stalls," and as these had to be occupied, canons, prebends, and archdeacons had to be provided. The meaning of these terms may be found in a good dictionary. There were chancel rails also, and these continued in use the practice of kneeling at the sacrament, leaving the mother church and its daughter in America uncommitted as to whether the rails enclose a communion table or an altar. Doubtless clerical habits and vestments were retained by custom and compromise, as the New Testament afforded no pattern for



them. So also the fond associations which the English people connected with some of their church festivals, their half-secular, half-religious sports, their games on village greens, their May-day, etc., were survivals from the past. The Charter of the Massachusetts Bay Company provided that its great courts should be held on "Hilary, Easter, Trinity, and Michaelmas ternis." Those words were brought hither in the Charter, but never appear afterwards in our records. Not a child in the first generation of our schools could have defined them. How many could do so now?

When we consider what charm in literature, in history, romance, and ballad, all allusions and associations attached to these English survivals of old sanctities and jollities have for us, and how in our wanderings in our old home we linger lovingly upon their scenes and memories, we can but marvel at the thoroughness of that weaning from them all in love and regret, which was marked and manifested by our first Puritan fathers here. After much reading even of the most private things which they have left us from their own pens, I cannot recall from them a single expression of melancholy, or tenderness, or heart-yearning for all such things which they had left behind them. Their food of thought was sterner stuff. Chief Justice Samuel Sewall, brought to this country as a boy in his tenth year, in 1661, spent a year in England in his manhood, in 1688. We have his Journal there. There is more of romance, sentiment, and pathos in his rhapsody on Merrimac River, written afterwards, than can be found in that whole Journal. Even the Episcopal Church in this country presents many marked divergences in aspect, ceremonial, method, and observance from those of the mother church. It is often the murmur of some of its ministers who love parade and form, that it has become Congregationalized. Indeed it



would be difficult to point to any essential difference between the method of its call, settlement, and tenure of office for its ministers, and those of Congregationalists. In nothing is a jealous watchfulness more observable than in the care of its laity, with whom substantially is the controlling power, to limit the interfering agency of the bishop. It seems as if Puritan air was variously effective.

Reverting again to the ancient records of the First Church of Boston, it may be observed that when compared with those of many of the early churches of New England, — kept by the pastors or other officers, — they are noticeably meagre in their entries. We fail to find in them a recognition of many matters which, as we reasonably infer, must, as they transpired, have been of great, occasionally of exciting interest. Reticence, reserve, stinted notice, often silence, are observable, where like records are full, and exhibit excitement.

Rich materials illustrative of the all-engrossing importance of every detail connected with their religious feelings and usages by our early church members, are accessible, in our old church and parish records, to those curious in such researches. They exhibit with what sensitiveness, often strong resistance and sorrow, the nevertheless steady succession of changes and innovations in methods and customs was received before they gained tolerance or approval. With all their interest and mental energy concentrated upon their religious affairs, in the lack of other resources for engaging their leisure and rest from bodily labors, they gave equal strength of feeling to their regular church routine and to anything which threatened to interfere with it, whether in the guise of improvements or in tokens of decaying zeal and love. So we may draw from most of the old Puritan church records a series of what to us may seem most trivial matters and occasions which dis-



turbed the peace of parishes, and foreboded or realized alienation and division. These too were largely wholly apart from the creed. The rebuilding of the early meeting-houses, with questions of change in the location; the disposal of the congregation according to the social rank and dignity of the members; the slightest modification of the wonted order of the exercises, or the method of proceedings; the introduction of a pitch-pipe to start a tune, and of additional tunes for their harsh psalmody; the reading of the Scriptures without exposition; the use of the Lord's prayer in public devotions; dispensing with the relation before the whole congregation of private religious experience as a condition of church membership, and with the confessions of members under censure; the successive changes of the Psalm Book; the addition of hymns of human composition; the allowance of foot-stoves and other heating apparatus,—all these, and a multitude of other changes and innovations, with the discussions and variances which they involved, cover many pages of these old church records. In such entries the records of the First Church are singularly deficient, and reticence is observable where we might look for some fulness of detail. In none of the sister churches has there been more, if even so much, of a quiet modification and adaptation of itself, in all matters of custom and usage, to the necessary changes of convenience or those which could claim good sense and reason for their allowance. Always excepting the direful commotion connected with the career of Mrs. Anne Hutchinson and the schism consequent upon the "Half Way Covenant," the First Church has had no quarrels, no imbittered internal strifes for record. The mild and wise advice of the ever venerated Winthrop easily disposed the threatened division about the site for the second meeting-house, and the church never had to call a council to reconcile any strife



among its members. Speaking relatively, we may say that self-respect, dignity, and a regard for peace and consistency characterize its internal history. These qualities are especially marked in reference to developments now to be noticed.

In the more recent years of the history of this church, a matter of much interest to such persons still among us as are concerned in tracing the developments of religious opinion, will attract attention in what will be called its "change of creed." The author of this renewed rehearsal of the line of its ministers, and of the principal matters chronicled in its records, has but briefly and incidentally referred to this subject. Some more extended notice of it may not be inappropriate here.

Corresponding to the process by which the First Church, when it was planted, essayed to revert to the original, simple, scriptural and apostolical pattern in church institution and discipline, its internal history presents to us another process in quite a different range of opinion, which, at least to those most concerned in it, was conscientiously held to be also a return to the early simplicity of the Christian system of belief. On the observance of the two hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the church, there appeared, in some of the journals of different religious denominations, a few sharp criticisms reflecting upon its present doctrinal relations as having fallen away from the faith of the fathers to such a serious degree as really to have severed the tie of descent and kinship. So far as concerns a departure from and a disuse of the doctrinal symbols of their Puritan ancestry and the adoption of views which the Puritans regarded as heretical, the criticisms and censures have full justification. The catechism, the prayers, the preaching, the terms of admission to church membership, are not now, either in substance,



tone, import, or conditions, what they once were. Happily the original covenant, so sweetly and simply devout and fragrant in its phrase and aroma of piety, is still the same. And the church is still the same living witness and servant for the truths and works of Christ's gospel, never in all its history more earnest and diligent in such service, than now, with its quarter of a millennium of years.

For a hundred and fifty years of its history the church may be said, or at least inferred, to have retained the doctrinal belief of its founders, as expressed in formularies, in the tone and language of devotional exercises, of sermons, exhortations, and standards for examining candidates. But those who have carefully searched in the primary sources of information the slow and gradual developments of opinion here on religious subjects, have found abundant evidence of the steady softening and modification of the old, sharp doctrinal beliefs. Reserve of utterance, a quiet silence on some matters, implied dissent, mark the passing away of shadows, till finally a bold and open rejection of views which were no longer accepted was the way of announcing the attainment of new light. There was an acquired momentum in this movement just before the opening of this century.

What is popularly known as the Puritan, or Orthodox, system of doctrine — and in recent years, by preference of terms, as “Evangelical” — was substantially wrought out, fashioned, and accredited for belief under quite a different philosophy of nature and of human life, and under quite a different estimate of the Bible, from those which now have an almost universal acceptance by intelligent persons in the exercise of serious thoughtfulness, with freedom and the helps of positive knowledge. This little globe of earth was then regarded as the representative orb of the universe, the suns and stars of heaven serving its use, as do our own

street gas-lights. The population of the globe and the religions of its inhabitants were unknown.

Two fundamental and central doctrines underlaid and supported the Puritan, or the so-called Orthodox, creed.

1. The Divine Being created only a single pair of our human race. All the uncounted millions that have since come from them have been by natural generation, they having all existed "in the loins of Adam," as the "Federal Head" of our race. God staked the result of the experiment as to the character and destiny of humanity upon the earth as the lineage of Adam, for all ages, upon the result of his trial of it. His lapse from obedience wrecked all his race, making them the victims of sin at their birth and the heirs of eternal woe.

2. Instead of staying the progress of this awful calamity at its source, by substituting for the foiled experiment another under changed conditions, — as, for instance, dispensing with the serpent, — the infinite mercy of God, triumphing over his justice, had recourse to a mysterious scheme by which, taking a human form, he came to this earth and allowed some of our race to put him to death as a sacrifice to himself; though this tragedy of Deity by no means rectified or repaired the whole calamity of humanity, — only those elected by the sovereign decrees of God having the benefit of this Divine atonement.

This Orthodox creed was elaborately wrought out, systematized, and expounded in particulars, details, and elements; it was traced, stated, and certified by words, phrases, half-sentences, and sentences of the Bible, regarded as dictated verbally by God, and set in a mosaic of proof texts. Many who profess still to hold this creed with devout tenacity of belief wish the privilege of stating it themselves, and of doing so with explanations, qualifications, abatements, and palliatives which to them, at least, reduce the ter-



rible significance that it has for those who utterly reject it. This sensitiveness to a bald statement of the creed is a significant intimation of a difference between those who profess it to-day, and the calm, bold, unflinching spirit of the old Puritans who gloried in giving it the sternest expression. A very apt and momentous suggestion here presents itself. We know that the foremost among our Puritan ancestors in all heroism, fidelity, and sacrifice, who firmly held that creed, and rejoiced in it as lifting them in privilege and divine favor above the wretched votaries of all heathen religions, were men whose nobleness of spirit we revere, whose manly and Christian virtues have secured for us the fairest heritage on the earth, and to whom faithful philosophic historians of civilization accredit the highest service to the manhood of humanity and to popular liberty. We ask why they were not palsied and crushed in spirit by such a terrific creed. We can but answer that they were stiffened and reconciled to it by their intense, consummate, and all-enthraling loyalty to the Sovereignty of the Supreme Being, who must work unchallenged his Divine will towards creatures who were but worms of the dust, hateful reprobates to be snatched only by a marvel of mercy from the yawning pit. Nor is it unfair to intimate that the most effective palliative to the terror of the creed was found in the belief that the most hopeful way of relief from its grim application to one's self was found in a desperate acknowledgment of its perfect equity and justice. One thing was certain, that the most direful infliction of doom would be visited upon those who doubted or stoutly denied its justice. The reason why the grim Puritan had no awe of man, prince or priest, monarch or pope, "whose breath was in his nostrils," and who was no way "to be accounted of," was because he had drawn his whole nature and being into absolute subjection to the dread Sovereign of Heaven. The Supreme Being,



in the Puritan thought of him, combined and exhausted all attributes of power, awe, and terror. Reverently bowing before the fulness of these prerogatives in him, they would not quail before any fragmentary assumption of them in priest or potentate. In the Puritan alone, of all churches, the fibre and tone of piety in men exceeded the prevalence of its spirit and manifestation among women.

What proportion of the men and women in the Puritan, or in any subsequent generation trained under that creed as both law and gospel, heartily, thoroughly, and without reducing any of its terms, believed it, in the full sense of real heart-belief, it would be difficult to estimate. Nor would it perhaps be wholly fair to regard, for instance, the very small minority of the congregation of the First Church who, as the records in this history show, were received by covenant into church membership, as elect and saved, as defining that proportion. The influence of the creed is not to be measured wholly by that test. Where it did not win belief, it stirred a variety of impressions and feelings in those whose average of character and conduct was as upright and pure as was that of its firmest votaries. Consternation, terror, distressing mental and spiritual conflicts, doubt, and utter and defiant unbelief, were the phases and degrees of the effects wrought by the creed upon those who could not or would not assent to it. But we are concerned chiefly with those who did, doubtless by most thorough sincerity of profession, accept the creed; for it was through them and their successors, ministers and people, that the creed was softened, reduced, reconstructed, and finally surrendered. Of the mountain heaps in print and manuscript, devoted to what we call religious and polemical literature, which have come down to our time as a fragment of mightier masses of the old Puritan years, there is one most striking characteristic which belongs in common to



them all, — book, pamphlet, sermon, diary, or letter. They all give proof of an amazing activity, fertility, ingenuity, and restlessness of mind spent upon working over the creed, in explanation, readjustment, or vindication. The efforts made for an elaborate statement and exposition of the Puritan system in all its roots, branches, twigs, and foliage of organic life, and to expound and certify its doctrines and inferences by the Bible, composed what were called "Bodies of Divinity." It was understood that one who had studied any considerable number of these mighty folios would be expected to produce another. There would have been no object in patenting or copyrighting either of these bodies of divinity, for nobody but the author of each of them would wholly approve it. Bossuet would have found a rare triumph in his theme, "On the Variations of Protestantism," could he have gathered but one in any hundred of these ponderous volumes in a library.

It soon began to be realized that a general avowal of belief of the Orthodox system must be held consistent with infinite variations of opinion and construction, amid manifold expositions of its parts and elements. Hence the divisions of a sect into schools and parties. What appeared at first to have been mere branches of the central stock, striking off in somewhat eccentric growths, were soon found to have been secretly grafted and to be bearing fruit of a suspiciously heretical flavor.

The processes and stages by which what is known, in our local history of the developments of religious opinion, as Liberal Christianity or Unitarianism, found acceptance among those who succeeded in membership and as proprietors of nearly all the ancient churches in the neighborhood of Boston, must be traced in other pages than these. In no one of these churches was the change

wrought more gradually, more quietly, more without notice or observation, than in the First Church. There is absolutely nothing found upon its records indicating even a disturbed harmony or a divided vote, as, in the election of successive pastors, degrees of rigidity, or of increased liberality of doctrinal belief or spirit, would make one candidate preferable to another. There were three parties in every one of the old parishes, each of which had distinct influence and agency in the attitude assumed towards the gradual relaxing of the original Puritan creed: these were the minister, the members of the church in covenant, and the general parishioners or proprietors taxed to support the ministry, commonly called the congregation. It was because all three of these parties in the First Church shared equally in the modifications and softenings of opinion and doctrinal views, working through the community, that the consequent adaptations in talents and belief which were needed in the pulpit were so placidly provided for. Sharp contentions there were in some other parishes consequent upon the relations assumed in either of the three following contingencies, or in combinations of them: the minister might retain the old rigidity of the creed, and by restricting accessions to the church, might keep that body steadfast to Orthodoxy; the church itself might claim separate and paramount authority in the selection of a new minister; the congregation, taxed for the support of the institution, might refuse to receive a minister whose views were objectionable to them.

The First Church was served by a succession of ministers of native abilities, furnished with the best education of their times, and well trained in professional tastes, aptitudes, and sympathies. Besides holding as close fraternal relations with their clerical brethren as do the priests of the Roman communion in their bachelor fraternities and their



secret councils, in which the laity have no share, they enjoyed what those priests do not,—the privileges of domestic life, and of intimate converse with their fellow-creatures in every grade and range of social condition, and especially with those of thought and culture. The company of scholars was for a long time a limited one. The compass of literature, compared with what it is to us, was narrow, and nearly all of what was current here for a century and a half was theological. It was simply by bringing the action of their minds to bear upon the creed in which they had been educated, and noting the restlessness which it stirred in every effort to qualify or readjust it, that they outgrew its limitations. It has often been affirmed, that if our Congregational divines had been held to a form of service and the repetition of the creeds, they and their people would have been saved from heresy in various forms. But they would not by this process have been saved from that worst heresy, the profession by the lips of what is false to the mind and the heart.

When the human mind, in the earnest, intelligent, and conscientious exercise of its faculties, fixes its searching study upon what is offered to it as a creed,—a summary statement of tenets for belief,—two distinct processes may be defined for its inquiry. The first will engage upon the substance or contents of the creed, its propositions, their meaning, and their consistency with what is known or fairly inferred in other departments of truth. The second inquiry will concern the authority, the source, the sanction from and by which the creed is derived and certified.

We do not hear now, nor have to plead to, as an earlier generation among us did, aspersions and prohibitions cast upon the exercise of our reasoning faculties in matters for religious belief. The familiar protest once was,—and it was conclusive to our Puritan ancestry,—human reason has



no rightful exercise upon truths or mysteries, doctrines or things to be believed, which God has graciously revealed; we have simply to accept them with humble submission and confidence. Honest and earnest men soon learned to answer that they were not challenging nor even reasoning upon God's ways and will, but simply the views and interpretations of them in religious doctrines, which were set forth in the words of other men. The only alternative to reliance on the exercise of one's own reason is reliance on the exercise of the reason of other persons, which, according to circumstances, it may be wise or unwise to yield; and the willingness to do it is the result of the use of more or less reason. No form of religious faith, ecclesiastical or doctrinal, was ever recognized which did not at some stage of it require or engage the exercise of the reasoning power. Even when anything is entertained as "revealed" or miraculously communicated, reason steps in to infer, interpret, or apply. "The angel of the Lord appears unto Moses in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush." Nevertheless, the sight is not interpreted for him till he "turns aside" and makes a study of the wonder. There is a transparent fallacy in the plea, "If God has revealed this or that, no human being, child, subject of his, should question or dispute it." The question is thrown back and becomes, "Has God revealed it, and how and to whom? and how does he reveal it to me?" Never was there a human being who would deny anything that he believed God had revealed. Under the firm and unswerving belief that God had revealed the articles of their stern creed, the Puritans, enthralled and subdued by the conviction, bowed themselves to a loyal and steadfast acceptance of it. There are millions of waiting and aching minds and hearts more than ready and willing to do the same to-day, if they can feel the same assurance of a revelation from God. But



when we examine the grounds and evidence on which those profound convictions of the Puritans rested, many find that they cannot in sincerity—the first quality of all religious life and faith—admit that the tests, methods, and results of the reasoning powers of the Puritans are valid to themselves. It is mere trifling to assert that this state of mind is peculiar to the avowed members of one denomination or fellowship of professed Christians, or to a class of persons called rationalistic, conceited, self-opinionated, and boastful of their mental freedom. It needs no argument or illustration to certify to us the fact, familiar to our reflections and observations, that the different results rested in for creeds, by individuals and religious fellowships, are largely decided by the different starting-points, the assumptions made, the concession yielded, the matter taken for granted as true, from which they proceed to deduce or to add their further articles of belief. Different seekers, questioners, and reasoners choose or adopt different starting-points, are ready to assume or to yield different assumptions or concessions, to consider different positions to be taken for granted or brought to the question. In this process some go farther back, so to speak, are more inquisitive, more radical than others. The convert in training for discipleship in the Roman Church is expected to accept a certain theory as to the idea, the institution, and the authority of the supernatural society which Jesus Christ founded on this earth. The Protestant goes back of the assumptions here made for a starting-point, and puts them to the tests of search and evidence. Some bodies of Protestants start with certain assumptions about the Bible; other Protestants challenge those assumptions and wish to be certified of their validity. Some pet phrases and forms of expression have a marvellous efficacy and potency for some minds, as for instance, “the form of sound words,” or “the faith once



delivered to the saints" applied to a creed. The glamour of the past, the fond and tender ties and filaments of association with ancient forms of reverential belief, make more than acceptable, indeed very precious, to some devout persons, narrations which, if set in the light and glare of the actual present, would at once lose their charm and power. The Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children would sternly take in hand any bald-headed prophet whose "cursing" should in these days set two she-bears to tear forty-two little children (2 Kings ii. 23, 24). A modern ecclesiastical council, local, provincial, or ecumenical, is what the average and combined wisdom, discretion, and limitations of view of the members make it. Was it ever otherwise? True, the pleasant legend tells us that though only three hundred and eighteen bishops were summoned to the Council of Nicæa, and only three hundred and eighteen seats were provided for them, yet whenever the forms of the members were counted, the count always yielded three hundred and nineteen. The unsummoned and unseated visitant was the Holy Ghost. His ballot, if it could have been recorded, would have outweighed all the rest.

We should have to look back to a date far beyond that of this famous council to find the earliest exercise of the activity and fertility of the human brain and fancy, in transforming the simple gospel of Jesus Christ, which began with the parables and the Sermon on the Mount, into the metaphysical, sacerdotal, and doctrinal system, which for so many ages has stood to represent the Christian religion. The highest and most satisfactory view — that which alone reconciles us to all the poor, mean, and embittered elements of the strife — to be taken of the long contention between those who have called themselves Christians, is that the wisest and best of those who have had part in it have thus

sought to work their way back to the substance of the original Gospel. They have wished to put themselves in the position and fellowship of those of whom it is written, "When He was set, his disciples came unto him: and he opened his mouth and taught them."

The Roman Pontiff tells us that his church is of Divine creation, organization, and sanction, supernaturally guided, built up of materials and elements in harmony with its celestial origin. To one who searches the often repulsive pages of "church history," so called, the claim is similar to that which should assert that the great temple of that faith, St. Peter's at Rome, had a Divine architect and plan, was reared from consecrated quarries, endowed with the pure, free gifts of pious trust and gratitude, and made the holy shrine of a humble, self-denying, and unworldly devotion. We know well how heathen temples and palaces were spoiled, from wall to foundation, for the stone blocks of that temple; how greed and extortion, the sale of "indulgences," and all the arts and appliances of superstition and priestcraft were plied to gather funds for its construction and lavish adornment; and we know how from its gilded pontifical throne there have gone forth edicts which have scourged the earth. The upbuilding, composition, and sway of the Roman hierarchy itself, the materials wrought into it, and the ends which it has been made to serve, are perfectly paralleled in that analysis of its great temple. The unbiassed and unprofessional reader of history can trace the dates and processes by which each and every accretion, usurpation, priestly device, and ecclesiastical extension of claim and prerogative was advanced and adopted in the Roman system; precisely as a local historian can inform us how a section of the earth, once virgin soil, was transmuted by time, civilization, art, and labor, into a great city, with all its noble and elevating



institutions, and also with the means, temptations, and hiding-places which minister to other than the innocent, pure, and honest proclivities of human nature.

And yet that Church, by the providential intervention and overruling which limit the range of the wrong and folly of man, has pages of its history, deeds and services of holy love and mercy, heroisms of sanctity and piety, consummate examples of every quality of nobleness and virtue, in grateful recognition of which civilized humanity will always reverently bow. But time and circumstances and occasion ripened the era when that church had to yield to the stern challenge of reformation. That process once begun has as yet found no limit or end. Christianity is the only religion ever known on this earth that could endure this process of reform. The Puritans thought they had set the model and standard for the completion of that work. But they left a doctrinal creed, in part the inheritance from the old ingenuities of human brains, and in part a contribution of their own sincere but bewildered piety, which has given serious perplexity and dismay to those who have come into their inheritance.

There are those of their lineage in land, in homes, and in Congregational churches, knit in close sympathies and associations by the ancient platform, who still profess a steadfast loyalty to the doctrinal creed and symbols of the Puritans. A considerable portion of these maintain that the creed is an essential element of the Puritan system of church polity, and so that they alone, excluding their former brethren who are now called Unitarians, are entitled to the name and heritage of Congregationalists. There will be few who will care to throw much interest into this claim, seeing that there are all over this vast land large fellowships of Christians, under different denominational names, whose polity is substantially that of Congregation-



alism. Far more importance is made — by an incident for ecclesiastical history in this passing year — to attach to the searching question whether those who now represent Congregationalism, as above limited, verily hold to the old Puritan doctrinal creed and symbols. Certain very natural, yet very embarrassing and perplexing experiences have brought this question into restless discussion among those whom it chiefly concerns. In the examination of candidates for the Congregational ministry, in the debates of councils and conventions, and in the published sermons and books of some of their prominent preachers, unmistakable tokens of heresy, of more or less serious departures from and bold denials of the fundamentals of the old creed, have been constantly manifesting themselves. The occasions have been so frequent and of such notoriety in discussion, and have been so annoyingly or mischievously played upon, that the representative men and the steadfast exponents of Congregationalism can no longer feel that they are faithful to themselves in failing to face an emergent demand on them. So, during this very year, the Congregationalists of this country, in general convention, provided for the selection and constitution of a large committee of their most honored representative men, professors of theology in school and college, scholars, divines and pastors, charged with the trust of reconstructing or readjusting the terms, the phraseology, and the contents of their denominational creed. It may be an exigent, but it certainly is a most perilous commission, one beset with risks and apprehensions. It may be entered upon in harmony, but with what spirit of demand and concession, of individual indulgence, and of general compliance it may proceed, and to what issue it will come, no human wisdom or foresight can trust itself to forecast. Nothing but a sense of high obligation to a constraining duty could have



secured sanction to the measure. One who will follow the developments with only a less degree of interest than those who are nearest to its central responsibility, can but wish most sincerely that the old Puritan honesty, fearlessness, and heartiness of purpose to be "fully persuaded in his own mind" may control the action of the committee, and may set for the belief of others only the standard which without qualification they accept for themselves.

And here it may be that very many persons will realize a full sense of the mischief which was wrought when, for those who must have a creed, the Westminster Symbol, with all its daring and needless ventures upon the fields of scholastic divinity, was substituted for the so-called "Apostles' Creed." This latter symbol is so engaged with Divine personages and their relations, that it hardly makes any recognition of man, the human being, in his state and nature. It refers to him by implication only, as one whose sins may be forgiven, and whose body will rise from death. There is nothing about his fall, his birth-depravity, his state of ruin, his doom, or about the method of his deliverance. But, taken in the detail and sum of its specifications, its definitions and its affirmations, its positive assertions, and its unargued, undefended interpretations of Divine deeds and purposes, — what a subject for mental and spiritual task-work is the Westminster Symbol! It was undoubtedly intended that the Scripture references to book, chapter, and verse, attached as "Proof-Texts" to the doctrinal statements of the creed, should be a fair digest of the whole teachings of the Bible. We all know that such detached and dislocated sentences and passages of the Book present quite different impressions when read by us in their places and interpreted by "the harmony of the Scriptures." So manifold, indeed, are the lights and shades of the attributes and purposes of God, as presented



in different parts of the Bible, that sentences of an inconsistent and even directly opposite tenor might, in very many important cases, be set against the "Proof-Texts" which are cited. One or more members of the revising committee may well be charged with special attention to this matter. And while the patient, earnest toil of chosen divines is to be given to this work, how are other classes of the world's great thinkers and teachers engaged in their different but as earnest searchings for high and needful truth about things human and divine! What questions crowd upon them!—"Can we ascribe Personality to the Power working in and through the Universe? Is anything knowable of God? Can any human being trust himself to interpret God's purposes and ways, or to formulate propositions about him? Was the origin of the human race in Unity or in Diversity? Is man a specific creation, or the issue of development or evolution? Was a degree of civilization or a state of abject barbarism his first state on the earth? Does a law of responsibility apply to man, any more or other than relatively applies to brute creatures? Is there ground or reason for a belief in a future life for man?" These and many other like searching and fearless questions, ploughing deep under the roots and foundations of all religious creeds, are tossed into the arena of public debate. They engage the thoughts of the profoundest philosopher, and of the artisan, the mechanic, and the husbandman who has an active brain. While these questions, in debate or in decision, run through all the most fresh and current literature of the age, a group of selected scholars and divines are to readjust the contents of the Symbol of the Westminster Assembly of Divines, to guide on the religious believings of men and women till the indefinite time when a like labor may be needed and repeated. We have been made to understand how pro-



foundly, either with full intelligence or with dull apprehension, the revision of the English text of the New Testament has moved the English-speaking world of men and women. The proposed readjustment of the Orthodox creed will engage and stir a deeper anxiety, and will involve vastly more of restless and passionate variances than have as yet engaged public attention since the circulation of the revision. To very many persons who are startled, if not shocked, by the freedom and positiveness with which the Westminster Symbol speaks of the methods, attributes, purposes, and decrees of God, this boldness touches upon irreverence. It has all the confidence which appears in the reports of interviewers who have pried into the secrets of great personages.

It may be said, however, that those who are put in trust with this hazardous and exacting responsibility of readjusting the creed have a much more simple task. They can plead that they have nothing whatever to do with any of the radical and still debated and unsettled questions raised by philosophers and men of science. Their work is wholly aside from these, and will make no account of them whatever. They are to recast, qualify, rectify, and amend terms, phrases, and propositions of the creed solely by bringing it into closer fidelity to the spirit and teaching of the Bible. The Bible is still to them a revelation from God, accredited for all time, made more intelligible year by year, but parting with nothing of its sanctity, its authority, its supreme sufficiency for men as a Divine oracle. Of course there are those, steadfast and decided in what are to them convictions, who will be fully satisfied with this position. There are others, it remains to be seen in what proportion of those concerned, whose onward-looking views will be far from approving it. It is enough to say that the creed is committed to certain affirmations about the Bible



as a whole, and in the composition of its parts, the doubting, qualifying, and denying of which enter into the foremost of the heresies in the Congregational and its affiliated bodies which have induced the subjection of the creed to the process it is now to undergo. The Bible — precious beyond terms of all estimate as it is, the crown and glory of the world's literature, bedewed and endeared by the fond piety of ages, more august and revered for its rule and law than all statute-books — is not to our age and its representative scholars and divines what it was to those of the age of the Westminster Assembly. Prelates and scholars of the English Church, divines and professors of theology in the Presbyterian Church, and their peers and fellows in all biblical learning in the Congregational body, — the very men set in high places to guard and defend the sanctity and claims of the Bible, — have themselves reduced the old estimate of it. The recent revision of the text has broken the spell of that stark superstition which attached literal inspiration and infallibility even to a translation of it. It has been admitted, even when not insisted upon, that where at certain points its contents touch the sphere of certified secular history and of positive science, it is faulted. The human element, and what is more, the legendary and mythical-fabulous element, is allowed to have an intrusive place in it, and when this allowance is yielded, its application will simply be a question of less or more, according to individual judgments. Other allowances are made on the score of figurative and Oriental imagery, and rectifications are introduced of dates and authorship of parts of the sacred volume. Such matters as these never entered even into the dreams of the Westminster divines. So, of course, their creed was constructed not only without deference to them, but as we may say in defiance of them. And a question striking even deeper than these must not be slighted.



When discussions arise upon words and sentences in the New Testament, as for instance on those which are used in arguing as to the doom of woe and horror for the vast majority of the human race, the question will not rest with asking merely the philology of the word *Eternal*, but will reach to examining the authority, the source of knowledge, and the infallibility of the writer of the words. How then can the readjustment of the creed be wisely and satisfactorily attempted without carrying the process into the modern estimate of the Holy Scriptures? The faith of millions in the Bible is still as their trust in the sunlight. But there is no occasion here for stating or urging the grounds on which, with multitudes of sincere, thoroughly informed, and responsible persons, its authority has ceased to be final on all religious subjects.

It is easy, in dismay or perplexity, to utter the protest: "If we cannot believe the Bible, where are we? We are all adrift concerning all that is serious and solemn in human life!" To say nothing of the fact that this has been and is now the case with the vast majority of the millions and millions of our race on the earth, the whole pertinency of the protest depends upon what is meant by belief in the Bible, and what are the grounds of that belief. It is certain that one condition of the validity of those grounds of confidence for those who share it will be the force and fairness with which they can commend them to other persons. At present the respective views which each of the two parties to an entire belief in the Bible seem to take of each other's position, as represented in our current literature, is as follows: The champion of the Bible says to the doubter, "Your pride of reason, your conceit, or your unregenerate heart leads you to reject the most precious gift of God to men." The doubter replies, "You believe because you allow your wishes and desires to persuade



you, on terms so easy and insufficient as to have no weight with others as seriously concerned as you are." The issue is momentous and intensely vital to the highest interests of humanity. A candid, generous, and tolerant spirit, with restraint of all impatient temper, and the wise use of means for attaining truth, are to be the mediators on this most serious of all discussions. One of the most impressive and bewildering of the real aspects of human life under its most civilized, refined, and favored conditions is, that between those who share the culture of thought, science, and wisdom, between those who meet courteously in all social relations, and even between those in the nearest and tenderest sympathies of a common family home, there is this appalling difference; that some are heaven-guided in trust and hope by a Holy Book, while others are drifting on unlighted seas without pilot or haven.

This matter, however, has found its way into these introductory pages, because of its relation to issues which divided here the old Congregational churches. The repudiated brethren will rejoice at least over their immunity in the responsibility for the recasting of the creed.

It is not to be regretted that the piety of the Puritan type and tone has become extinct even here, where in its heroic age it planted what has become to us so privileged and secure a heritage. Its sincerities having weakened, its standards and usages may well be yielded up. Its age of thorough earnestness and conviction was short, hardly passing unreduced into a second generation. Even in its own most vitalized fellowship its effects on individual character were softened or roughened by the traits and temperament of its disciples. In Cotton and Winthrop, men of mild and gentle spirit, with sweet restrainings of zeal and passion, we have the most winning exhibitions of a steadfast fidelity toned by humility and kindness, and



checked by a patient forbearance. In some of their associates and contemporaries, men like Endicott, Dudley, and Norton, austerity of creed, temper, and manner was not offset or relieved by the more gracious amenities and charities.

What is lamented over often, as the decay of religion and piety in our times, is explained, reduced, and largely compensated by broader, more cheerful, more generous and practical views of religion, and especially by a more unselfish regard for it as a comprehensive and universal blessing of humanity. Starting with the fundamental of the old direful creed, that all of our generations were born under a curse, with the eternal sentence already passed upon them, it could not be otherwise than that the intensest religious interest, its supreme passion, should centre for the individual upon his own deliverance. Left to its own natural workings, that individual dread or hope has manifested itself in ways sadly repulsive to those of generous minds. There is something beyond measure odious in the selfishness by which the whole problem of the universe has been made for each single individual, here or there, to turn upon the salvation of his own soul, whatever fate befalls the uncounted myriads of the human race. It prompted the instinct like that of a rush to the long-boat from a crowded wreck. The image suggested is that of St. Peter's ship floating in a surging tempest. And this took the place of the Saviour's all-pitying love, and of the Father's house of many mansions. The approved Scripture method for saving one's own soul is in saving the soul of some other person. But the method for personal, individual salvation came to be indicated as the avowal of some sentiment, or emotion, or inner experience, or assent to a doctrine, or "accepting Jesus." So that in result it could not but appear, in all outward seeming at least,



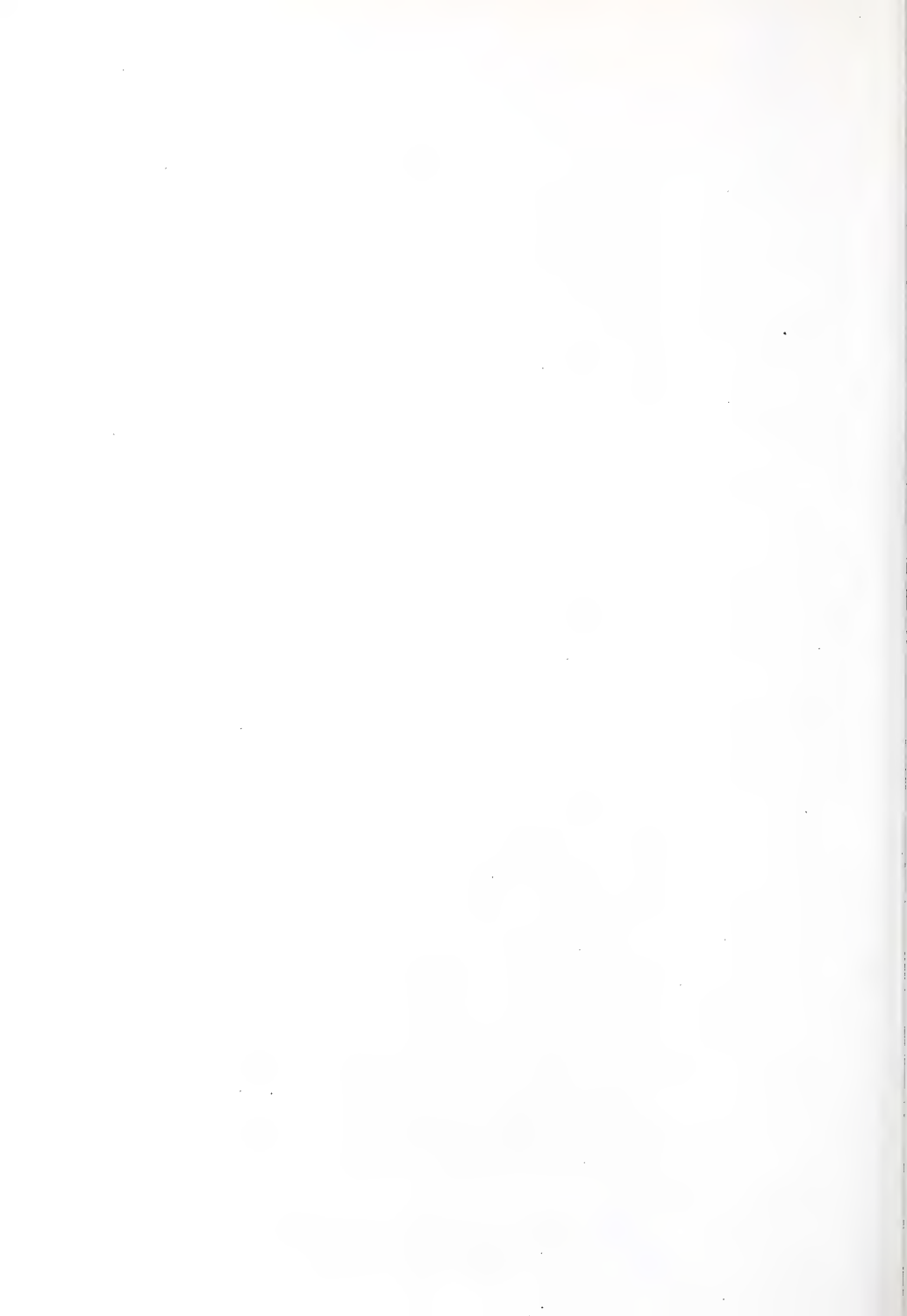
that persons not one whit less devoted than others to all worldly interests, gains, and rivalries, nor at all disengaged from the jealousies and frivolities of social life, were persuaded to believe that they had been passed over the awful chasm that divides perdition from salvation, leaving those humanly dearest to them on the dark side. Why is it that we should assign to the Infinite Father a classification of souls so different from what we ourselves acknowledge when we know that some of the purest and worthiest lives and characters are exemplified before us in those who had no deliverance through the technical "Scheme of Salvation"? An enlargement of the idea of religion from its root to its fruitage was commended to us, if we ought not to say forced upon us, in this community, when the judgment was spoken and unchallenged, that in the social and business relations and responsibilities of life no additional confidence was secured to a man in that he was known as a "professor," or prominent in zeal and service for a sect. Practical, generous, benevolent, and unselfish religion is the current coin among all denominations.

Of any object or institution in this changing world which, like the First Church of Boston, has the longest continuing history of anything in it in record and use, we are naturally interested to ask concerning its outlook for the future. In scarce any place on the earth could such a question present itself attended with more uncertain and perplexed conditions than in this city, amid the rapid and complete transformations of all the ordinary securities and tokens of permanency. The surface of all the original territory has been changed, and there is here more of new land than of the old. The marts of business have usurped the sites of the ancient homesteads, schools, and meeting-houses. The native population has largely sought other places for residence, and foreign peoples have crowded in here. The



costliest and newest church edifices — including that of the First Church, on its fourth site — now stand where, till recently, the tidal waters of the west bay flowed in from Charles River. One or more Protestant churches of each of the denominations have become extinct after a longer or a shorter life. A statute of the Commonwealth enjoins that the records of such extinct religious organizations be deposited with the clerk of town or city, and their history for the past must be sought in his office; though some of such churches had expired previous to this enactment. The contingencies of the continuance and the prosperity of the Protestant churches of all denominations in this city are peculiar, and not in every respect desirable or commendable. For a Roman Catholic Church only a population near it of that faith is necessary, the parishioners having no choice or privilege in selecting their pastor, that being the prerogative of the bishop, and it is as a functionary chiefly that one or another pastor serves. In a Protestant church here, whatever the denomination, individualism, with its preferences, its likes and dislikes, has supreme sway. All depends upon the abilities and qualities of the minister for the time being. A church which will flourish under a strong and gifted minister, filling its pews and enriching its treasury, may waste away under an incompetent or unpopular successor. If the church be conspicuous and costly, its responsible officers will make every effort to reconstruct and save the society by seeking for "the right man." The most thronged place of worship at this time in the city, less than a score of years ago, with a former edifice and under former ministers, could scarcely find those willing to receive and occupy its pews as a free gift.

The objects of institutional religion, as represented in churches and congregations, are three : —



I. The exercise of the devotional sentiments in offices of worship.

II. The offering of religious and moral instruction and exhortation.

III. The opening and supplying and drawing from the springs of benevolence, uniting sympathies, gifts, and services in all the charities and agencies which minister to human needs and sorrows.

I. The offices of devotion are prayer, sacred music, and readings from Scripture. Any one of the old founders of the First Church, if he could appear within its walls upon any Communion Sunday in fair weather, it is to be inferred would be more disturbed by the general conduct and method of the services, than by anything he would hear in discourse from the present occupant of the pulpit. He would have to listen to portions of the Common Prayer Book, complemented by some of his own method of devotion, and though he would not wholly miss his own beloved style of congregational singing, the interposition of the organ and of the chantings of the artistic professional choir would cause him grief. He would see upon the communion table the same vessels from which he had partaken in the holy rite, and though there is a chancel and a place where those who so wish may kneel in receiving the elements, he would rejoice to see that the communicants retained their seats, and were served by the oldest-fashioned scriptural deacons. Possibly he might be reconciled to the storied windows, by observing that while the richest of them spread forth the covenant which he himself had signed, the others offered only strictly scriptural subjects, with no interminglings of apocryphal saintship.

The form of service was adopted after due deliberation as an experiment, subject at any time to reconsideration.



It is preferred and warmly approved by some, quietly conformed to by others, and tolerated by the rest, a few being not in sympathy with it.

II. The provision of religious instruction appropriate to devotional Sunday services, such as will carry with it persuasion, edification, and a constraining power for good over heart and life in character, is where in these passing years the strain is felt most anxiously, most painfully, and with a general bewilderment of thought and purpose. There is a fundamental and irreconcilable variance of judgment as to what themes and methods are or are not appropriate to the pulpit, or, as we must now add, the platform. Those who charge themselves with the defence and support of Christian and other religious institutions cannot wisely or decently disregard the fact, that increasing numbers of sincere, intelligent, and devout persons turn away from the preaching of all the denominations, whether of rigid or liberal creeds, as disappointing, powerless, or without efficacy for them. Only the weak conceit of ministers, which is of itself more than half of the repelling and nullifying influence, can lead them to find a professional solace in ascribing this popular aversion and dissatisfaction to the fault of the so-called "outsiders." It is insiders too who are in the same mood of mind and feeling. There are persons, moderate in tone and judgment, who allow themselves to affirm that even the majority of those who come out of church doors, of all denominations, are not firm and thorough believers in the fundamentals from which the preachers take their start in discourse; that is, they do not believe them as they believe that they must eat food, in order that they may keep alive, as did the Puritans.

The essential and indispensable basis for all public religious discoursing that shall be effective and positive is,



that the preacher plant himself upon, start with, and argue and plead from, some truths, few or many, the certainty and authority of which are admitted, recognized, unquestioned by him and his hearers. He may indeed inform them and convince them of some truths of which they were doubtful or heedless. But these must be deductions or consequences from other truths, the certainty and authority of which are admitted. Thus the statesman has a constitution for his basis, and the judge in his court has well-defined and fortified statutes for his. What basis has the preacher in these days? It may be answered, faith in a divinely revealed and attested body of religious truth. But what if his hearers have not this faith, or have it not in the form and working which he assumes for it? There are multitudes around us ready to plead that it is time enough for them to begin to exercise faith where their knowledge stops, and that their knowledge conflicts with what some preachers offer for faith. Heretofore it has been the custom for preachers to assume certain tenets of a creed, and then to force into accordance with them the phenomena of nature, the proved facts of science, experience, and history, and all the rebellings of the most sincere and trustworthy exercises of the human mind and heart. For instance, it was for ages preached and widely believed that death was introduced upon this globe in consequence of Adam's sin. But when the remains of animals that had perished before the era of humanity were brought to light, the Orthodox geological professor answered, "As it was foreseen and foreordained that Adam would sin and die, the death of animals was provided for by anticipation."

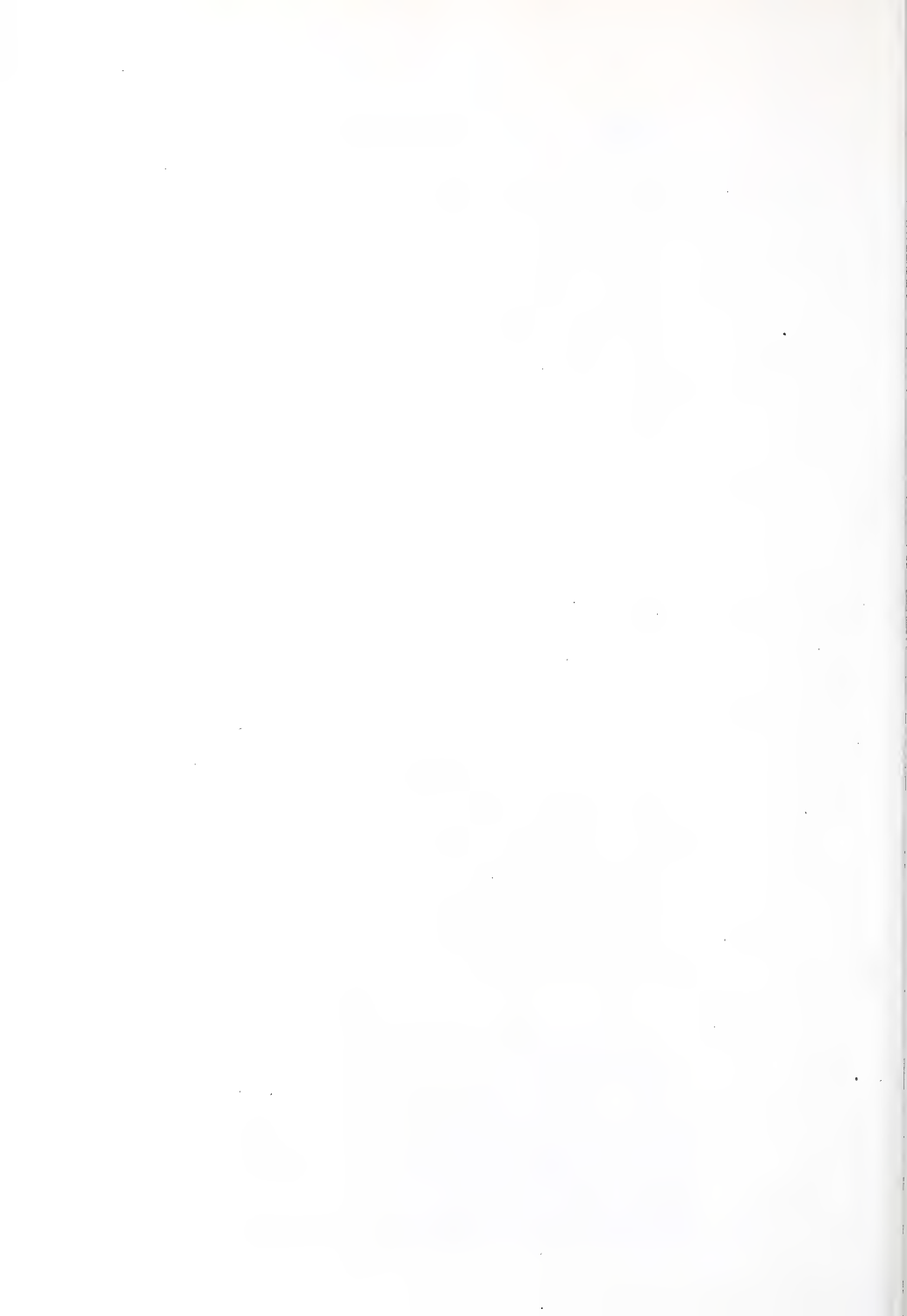
But are there any, and if any, what facts of common, admitted, unquestioned truth and authority, alive and throbbing with power for appeal, command, warning, and counsel, which are believed in and admitted, felt with awe



and solemnity in the very depths of consciousness, by preachers and those whom they address? Yes. Such truths are the mysteries, the sanctities, and the moralities of human life on the earth. These verities, with invaluable and inexhaustible helps to illustrate them, to give them persuasion and experimental power, drawn from the Bible and the Christian Gospel, are the sufficient furnishings of theme and material for the preacher, if he has in himself the gifts and power to use them. With such facts, with such authority and uses for preacher and hearer, there is no ground of fear for the dying out of institutional religion. When we consider to what dismal drooping, drivelling, and inanity millions of many generations have patiently listened as preaching, may we not believe that there is before us a nobler dispensation of it, though it may still bear, as with Paul, for one of its epithets, that of "foolishness"?

• In this universe of wisdom and marvel, in this life of dread and mystery, there is no reason why a single volume, however precious, should stand for the whole material, substance, and authority of religion. The time has come for protesting, not against the reverent and grateful precedency of the Bible, but against the idolatrous and indiscriminate use of its contents, as the sole basis and citadel of institutional religion. No pulpit is consecrated unless the Bible lies upon it; but religion is broader and fuller than its pages.

III. The third leading and inclusive object of religious institutions among us now is what is aptly defined as "church work." And in its present scope and method it may be called so modern as to be dated in our own time. We may well rejoice that in the distracting discussions about beliefs and philosophies in religion a diversion has been provided to engage hearts and hands to the relief of brains



and fancies. Those who live in large cities in these days, especially in this our own home, may well find a theme for profound and grateful thought, as they observe even the minute classification and distribution of the various ills and afflictions of humanity, as represented in our asylums, refuges, and charitable institutions, all, with but two or three exceptions, monuments of private benevolence, not provided for or maintained by the municipal treasury. The classification is a broad and a specific one. It includes homes and helps for old men, old women, orphans, children, and infants; for white and colored; for the infirm and for the superannuated; for those whose maladies are of the brain, the heart, the lungs, the limbs, the eye, and the ear; the curable and the incurable; the idiotic and the feeble-minded; for those who can be mended by ready skill, and those who need the science of the most advanced training and to be wrought upon in the oblivion of their senses. Viewed in the distribution and in the sum of their objects, one may indeed gather, from contemplating these institutions, a profoundly pathetic impression of the variety of the inflictions of woe and sorrow. And then his relief must be found in taking a closer second gaze upon them. All these institutions have about them the freshness of newness in structure and appointments. There is no sign of antiquity upon them. Some of them, indeed, are reconstructions simply for enlargement. The date of every one of them may be found within the records of this century. Over the gateways of most of them might be inscribed the words read over the entrance to an old refuge in the city of Berne, "CHRISTO IN PAUPERIBUS." Over all of them in their groups might be repeated the inspiring and soothing Gospel: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the Gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken-



hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind; to set at liberty them that are bruised; to preach the acceptable year of the Lord."

What agency has the Church of Christ in Boston had in all these institutions and offices of benevolence and mercy? The church invented Sunday and also the contribution-box. There was force in the words of a faithful First Church servitor, when, after carrying that wooden pleader through the aisles twice in one day, he said, "I think after this I may keep my seat, for the box ought to know its own way round." The early Boston churches supported their ministers by a weekly voluntary contribution, an eye being had to occasional increase of the contents by the gifts of strangers present at the worship. Saving a few instances in which sufferers by a conflagration were aided in the same way, the first special collections in the churches were made for the redemption of white captives carried by the Indians into Canada, when they found this use of their prisoners more profitable than tomahawking them. Occasionally a member of a congregation enslaved by Barbary pirates was redeemed by the same method of raising his ransom. Not very rarely too one or more impoverished persons in the flock, who had known better days, were thus tenderly cared for. Any one whose poverty and want were the issues of laziness and thriftlessness was ready to compound by being left by the church without a reckoning.

Our numerous permanent benevolent institutions have been endowed by bequests of the rich, and some of them could perpetuate their agency without any further gifts. It is to be believed that these splendid endowments may for the most part be accredited to the training and influence which their donors received from the church. It would indeed be a grievous reproach to the church — one, however, not likely to befall it — if the spirit of generosity



and sympathy quickened without its doors should organize itself into a practical religion of good works. The church has anticipated this barely conceivable possibility. The churches as property are exempted from civic taxation. It is on the assumption that they purify and neutralize some of the sources of evil and feed the springs of benevolence. There are only two methods of ministering to a world of wretchedness, — by municipal tax and by the voluntary gifts and services of the generous and unselfish. The "such as I have" is often of more service than would be a gift of money. And the demands upon all the forms and methods of helpful service steadily increase with civilization as well as with population. The familiar text needs an addition to it, thus, "The poor ye shall always have with you," and more of them.

It is a noticeable fact, likewise, that the municipal treasury has been steadily relieved of what would have been its burdens were it not for church and other outside voluntary benevolence. If the sum of all the annual disbursements by the treasurers of our societies and the distributions from churches were added to the assessors' roll, proposed luxurious public improvements would have long to wait. It is a noteworthy and suggestive fact, that while we, for our public improvements, are transferring to posterity a burden of debt, we are relieving them of the demands on their benevolence by the lavish endowment of charitable institutions. This assumption of the relieving work once performed by the town of Boston, and that would otherwise now fall upon the city, proceeds upon the double conviction that such public largesses are wasteful and mischievous, while agencies into which religion enters are wiser, kindlier, and more effective. The first experience by which the need and desire for some other than municipal provision in this and other towns and cities of the



Commonwealth manifested themselves, was when our comfortable and not large asylums, provided for the relief of such of our own native population as had known better days, "the worthy poor," and the unfortunate, became crowded with the refuse of foreign countries. Association with these new-comers was felt to be a bitter aggravation of previous misfortunes. Ever since there have been a purpose and efforts for a more tender and Christian oversight and help of our own dependent people, while great State asylums have been provided for other classes of the helpless. Municipal institutions and oversight cannot, as a general rule, reach to such cases, or offer such ministrations as come more appropriately under the charge of religious methods and sympathies. Police watchfulness is naturally more devoted to the exposure of fraud and imposture than to searching for obscure and unobtrusive sufferers. The only religious recognition which the Roman Catholic priesthood here make of their Protestant brethren is to regard them as available for help in supporting the hospitals and refuges which are under their own special charge.

The earnest and generous interest manifested by religious organizations in recent years, in the manifold directions of active benevolent effort and helpful service, is all the more observable under a special view of it just at this time. The pledged responsibility for the support of religious institutions, costly churches, and the care of them, and the provisions made for music, rests with a minority of the people, even of those in established households. Being found in their places in the churches, it is but natural that they should be addressed by and be expected to respond to all appeals for funds, meetings, supplies, and personal services in all "church work." It would not be strange, indeed, if among the many reasons which have thinned



attendance upon the churches, has been a care to be secured from the incessant demands made there on the purse and on personal service in committee or as visitors. Though money, which "answereth all things," and which is the sole agency of municipal benevolence, enters largely into the means and methods of religious ministrations to the needy, the depressed, and the suffering, it is by no means the only, and one is even tempted to say not always the most serviceable and effective, sympathetic and helpful service engaged by religion in "church work." Visits to homes, provision for neglected children in them, nursing, encouragement, helping out exertions which have been aroused after hope and effort had been given over, training and education for useful employments, — these are means of which the difference between the entire neglect of them and the faithful, earnest use of them will appear in any community in facts and aspects obvious to the careful eye. The rejuvenation of the Thanksgiving festival and the revival of the observance of Christmas and Easter are to be referred in large measure, not so much to any renewal of reverence and religious zeal in our community, as to kindly sentiments engaged through them to send relief and glee and happiness into places and lots which would otherwise lack them.

Of course "there are spots in the Feasts of Charity." Religious visitors will find here and there hypocrites and pretenders who will assume some odious guises; and the number of such cases may be matched by those in which help and sympathy may be made contingent upon some poor sectarian compliance. But wisdom and shrewdness will detect imposture, and whatever capital sectarianism may gain by dole and pledge will not reward any rivalry to obtain it.

The closing pages of the following history will indicate,



modestly only, as is becoming, the methods and the earnestness with which the First Church in Boston assumes its share in a work distributed among many folds with many names.

Supposing that corporate religious institutions in this community, like that of the First Church, continue their historical existence, it will probably be only after the lapse of considerable periods of time that their history will be reviewed. Present experiences and expected changes in the years soon to come will, doubtless, introduce wholly new conditions in the support, relations, and administration of these institutions. Regrets and censures have been freely expressed among us at the cost, the extravagant outlay, lavished upon some of our newest church edifices, built as substitutes for far less expensive ones on former sites. But it may be that a compensating benefit will, in a measure, if not wholly, offset the temporary evils of this lavish outlay. There has recently been manifested a strong and healthful discontent under the burden of "church debts," and a conviction that temples dedicated to God should not be mortgaged to men. This feeling has prompted the removal of such indebtedness. The costliest of these new edifices are now free of such pecuniary incumbrance. As pieces of property the ownership of them is divided between the corporate body and the pew proprietors. They have thus a pledge of perpetuity. Their value, their solidity and beauty, their conveniences and adaptations, make them a legacy to posterity to be used under a sense of gratitude to the givers, and with a consequent responsibility for turning them to the best account.



HISTORY

OF THE

FIRST CHURCH IN BOSTON.

CHAPTER I.

1630-1632.

JOHN WILSON.

Origin and Foundation of First Church in Boston. — Worship, Discipline, and Government.

THE history of First Church in Boston begins with the occupation of Charlestown by the English colonists under Winthrop. It was there that the founders of our church signed the covenant and became a body of worshippers. The *Arbella*, the vessel in which they crossed the ocean, put into Salem harbor the 12th day of June, 1630, and "went to Mattachusetts" the 17th of the month. After exploring the latter neighborhood, she returned to Salem the next day but one, and, joined by the rest of the fleet, again set sail, and came to anchor in Charlton harbor, as Winthrop calls it, early in July. They found that other Englishmen had visited the spot before them. The Sprague brothers, Ralph, Richard, and William, together with others, had previously made their way to the place, through



the woods, from Salem, in the summer of 1629. At that time the town records describe it as "a neck of land, generally full of stately timber, and the country round about an uncouth wilderness." But the Spragues found that they too had been preceded by one Thomas Walford, a smith, who with his family was the first white settler in the place. Shortly before the arrival of Winthrop, and in order to prepare for that event, one Thomas Graves, "an experienced engineer," had come from Salem, and built a house called the Great House. This was a two-storied wooden block structure, the lower part used for storage purposes, and the upper story for civil, and if the weather was so unpleasant as to prevent worship out of doors, for religious, meetings.

Our pioneers came poorly prepared to contend with the hardships of their new situation. They had brought over small provision with them, trusting to a report that they would find plenty on their arrival in the new country; and what they had was badly damaged by the voyage. Their means of shelter were poor, and the long confinement on shipboard had made many of them diseased. "And although the people were loving and pitiful," says the old record, "yet the sickness did so prevail, that the whole were not able to tend the sick as they should be tended, upon which many perished and died and were buried about the Town Hill." To meet the scarcity of provisions, the Governor despatched



Captain Pearce to the coast of Ireland in quest of a fresh supply. It must have been that that country was thought to be nearer than any other, otherwise there would seem to be some reason for thinking with Cotton Mather, that perhaps there were other places more overflowing with milk and honey, to which it would have been wiser to send. However, as afterwards appears, the errand proved fruitful of success.

In spite of these adversities — we might rather say because of them — the people hurried on the organization of the church. The 30th of July was set apart as a day of fasting and prayer, and after solemn religious exercises, Governor Winthrop, Deputy-Governor Dudley, Mr. Isaac Johnson, and Mr. John Wilson subscribed the following church covenant, the same which is continued with us to-day: —

“In the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ, & in Obedience to His holy will & Divine Ordinaunce.

“Wee whose names are herevnder written, being by His most wise, & good Providence brought together into this part of America in the Bay of Massachusetts, & desirous to vnite our selves into one Congregation, or Church, vnder the Lord Jesus Christ our Head, in such sort as becometh all those whom He hath Redeemed, & Sanctified to Himselfe, do hereby solemnly, & religiously (as in His most holy Proesence) Promise, & bind o’selves, to walke in all our wayes according to the Rule of the Gospell, & in all sincere Conformity to His holy Ordinaunces, & in mutuall love, & respect each to other, so neere as God shall give vs grace.”



Of the first four signers of this covenant an extended account is unnecessary. Their history is bound up with that of the Commonwealth. John Winthrop, the first Governor, and the first signer of the church covenant, was of good family, and enjoyed what was then regarded as a large income, amounting to six or seven hundred pounds a year. He was bred a lawyer, and was some forty-three years of age when he came from England. Thomas Dudley was first Deputy-Governor, and afterwards for four years Governor of the colony. In early life, after receiving a good legal education, Dudley served for a short time as captain of English soldiers under Queen Elizabeth in the army of Henry IV. of France. Subsequently he managed with great prudence the large estates of the Earl of Lincoln. He was fifty-three years of age when he came to this country. Isaac Johnson was a gentleman by birth and of fortune, and had married a daughter of the Earl of Lincoln. The sad death of the Lady Arbella, followed shortly after by that of her grief-stricken husband,¹ was the first shadow which spread a gloom over the colony.

The Rev. John Wilson, the first pastor of the church, was born and bred in clerical atmosphere, and, had it not been for his non-conformity, would doubtless have held some high position in the Church

¹ September 30, 1630, about one month after his wife. "He was a holy man, and wise; and died in sweet peace, leaving some part of his substance to the colony." — WINTHROP'S *Journal*.





Eng. wieson.



of England, as did his immediate ancestors. But, like other strong and scrupulous characters of the period, he preferred a life in the wilderness to the enjoyment of clerical preferment at the sacrifice of his religious convictions. He shares the epithet, affixed by Cotton Mather to the first four ministers of our church, of "Johannes in eremo." Of his immediate ancestors, his grandfather, "William Wilson, late of Wellsbourne in the co. of Lincoln, Gentleman, departed this life within the Castle of Windsor in the yeare of our Lord 1587, the 27 Day of August, and lyeth buried in this place." (Tombstone in the chapel of Windsor Castle.) Wellsbourne is not far from Lincoln and Boston, and this fact indicates some special tie among the early settlers who came from Lincolnshire.

His father, William Wilson, D.D., of Merton College, Oxford, Prebendary of Rochester, Rector of Cliffe, Chancellor of St. Paul's, and Canon of his King's Majesty's free chapel of St. George, within his castle of Windsor, where he lies buried, died May 15, 1615, aged seventy-three years.

John Wilson,¹ our minister, was born at Windsor in 1588. His mother was Isabel Woodhal, niece of Edmund Grindal, the celebrated Puritan Archbishop of Canterbury. He was educated at Eton and King's College, Cambridge, and married Elizabeth, daughter of Sir John Mansfield.

¹ His life is described in a later chapter (see Chap. III.). This little sketch of his family and antecedents was partly furnished by Mr. Thomas Minns, a descendant of Wilson.



Dr. Edmund Wilson, brother of Rev. John Wilson, died in England soon after the arrival in this country, leaving £1000 to the infant colony.¹

Mrs. Wilson, the pastor's wife, died June 6, 1660.

"On the 1st of August, Increase Nowell and four others united with the church and signed the covenant, and soon the number amounted to sixty-four men and half as many women."

From the very start religion was uppermost in the minds of the colonists. Religion planted the colony. When the first General Court was held on the 23d of August, before any measures had been taken to provide for support or shelter, the first topic of discussion was, "How shall the ministers be maintained?" And it was ordered that houses be built for them with convenient speed at the public charge, and salaries provided at £30 for Mr. Phillips of Watertown, and £20 for Mr. Wilson of Boston till his wife come over. Sir Richard Saltonstall undertook to see the former part of this order carried out for Mr. Phillips, and the Governor for Mr. Wilson.

"On the 27th of August another fast was observed, and the church duly organized by the appointment of the proper officers." The list of regularly appointed church officers at this date included pastors, teachers, ruling elders, deacons, and sometimes

¹ Mr. Wilson made a second and last voyage to England in 1634, partly to secure this legacy; and returned in 1635, this time with his wife and family. His first voyage in 1631 was unsuccessful in the special object sought for. See *infra*, 9.



deaconesses or widows. The functions of the widows, as laid down by a quaint writer, were "to show mercie with chearfulnesse and to minister to the sick and poore brethren." In another place the writer adds, "No church there [meaning Boston] hath a widow as far as I know;" an observation which we must be careful not to construe too literally. The distinction between pastor and teacher is somewhat nice.¹ The same writer says: "It is the duty of the pastor to exhort and besides to rule; the teacher to instruct in knowledge and likewise to rule." The elders were the Levites, or governing officers of the church, and the deacons performed the same duties as they do to-day, viz. received the contributions and accounted for the same.

The following were duly qualified: John Wilson as teacher; Increase Nowell, ruling elder; William Gager and William Aspinwall, deacons. Gager died September 20, 1630, a few days after his appointment. In the case of Mr. Wilson it was expressly understood that the ceremony should have no effect on his previous ordination by the bishop in England.

¹ Palfrey, in his chapter on "Primitive Institutions and Customs of New England," says: "A church fully furnished had a pastor and a teacher whose duty it was to preach and administer the ordinances, the distinctive function of the former being private and public exhortation, of the latter doctrinal and scriptural explanation." The reading of the Bible, or dumb reading, as it was called, was not generally approved, but thought to be too much in conformity with the Church of England practice, hence one of the functions of the teacher, viz. scriptural explanation or expounding, as it was called. — *History of New England*, ed. 1860, Vol. II. 37, 42. See also *History of Second Church in Boston*, note to 22.



We now find the church fairly organized, the minister provided for, and nothing wanting but a place of worship. "The first meeting-place of the congregation was in the umbrage of a large tree."

In the month of August many of the colonists removed across the river to Boston; and soon a majority of the inhabitants of Charlestown, including the Governor, had made the change. "The principal cause which led to this removal was the want of running springs of water. The notion prevailed that no water was good for a town but running springs; and they were at that time acquainted with but one spring in Charlestown," which was on the margin of the river, in the sand, and when the tide was high could not be come at, and at other times was very brackish. Mr. William Blaxton, the first white inhabitant of Boston, first called the attention of the Governor to the existence of a pure spring of water on his side of the river. This information, combined with the increasing sickness, induced the Governor to make the change. From this period up to the time of separation, the people of Charlestown were obliged to cross the river to attend meetings, — an operation, in the winter time at least, involving much hazard. Provisions had now become very scarce, and had it not been for the timely arrival of Captain Pearce with an abundant supply, they would have had hard work to keep alive.



"The people were compelled to live upon clams and muscles, ground nuts and acorns, and these were obtained with much difficulty in the winter time, and upon these accounts they became much tired and discouraged, especially when they heard that the Governor had his last batch of bread in the oven. And many were the fears of the people that Mr. Pearce, who was sent to Ireland to fetch provisions, was cast away or taken by pirates; but God, who delights to appear in greatest straits, did work marvellously at this time, for before the very day appointed to seek the Lord by fasting and prayer, about the month of February or March, in comes Mr. Pearce, laden with provisions; upon which occasion the day of fast was changed and ordered to be kept as a day of thanksgiving."

This was on the 22d of February (O.S.).¹ The provisions were distributed among the people in proportion to their necessities. To show what a good face they kept under all their trials, we are told that a man, "inviting his Friends to a dish of Clams, at the Table gave thanks to Heaven, who had given them to suck the abundance of the Seas, and of the Treasures hid in the Sands."

In March, 1631, Mr. Wilson went to England to bring his wife. Before embarking, "Mr. Codrington [afterwards for many years Governor of Rhode Island] and Mr. Wilson, and divers of the congregation, met at the Governor's, and there Mr. Wilson, praying and exhorting the congregation to

¹ In quoting from old records no attempt has been made to alter the date from Old to New Style. The simple process of adjustment is this: "To change from Old to New, add ten days to any date from 1600 to 1700, and eleven days to a date from 1700 to September 14, 1752."

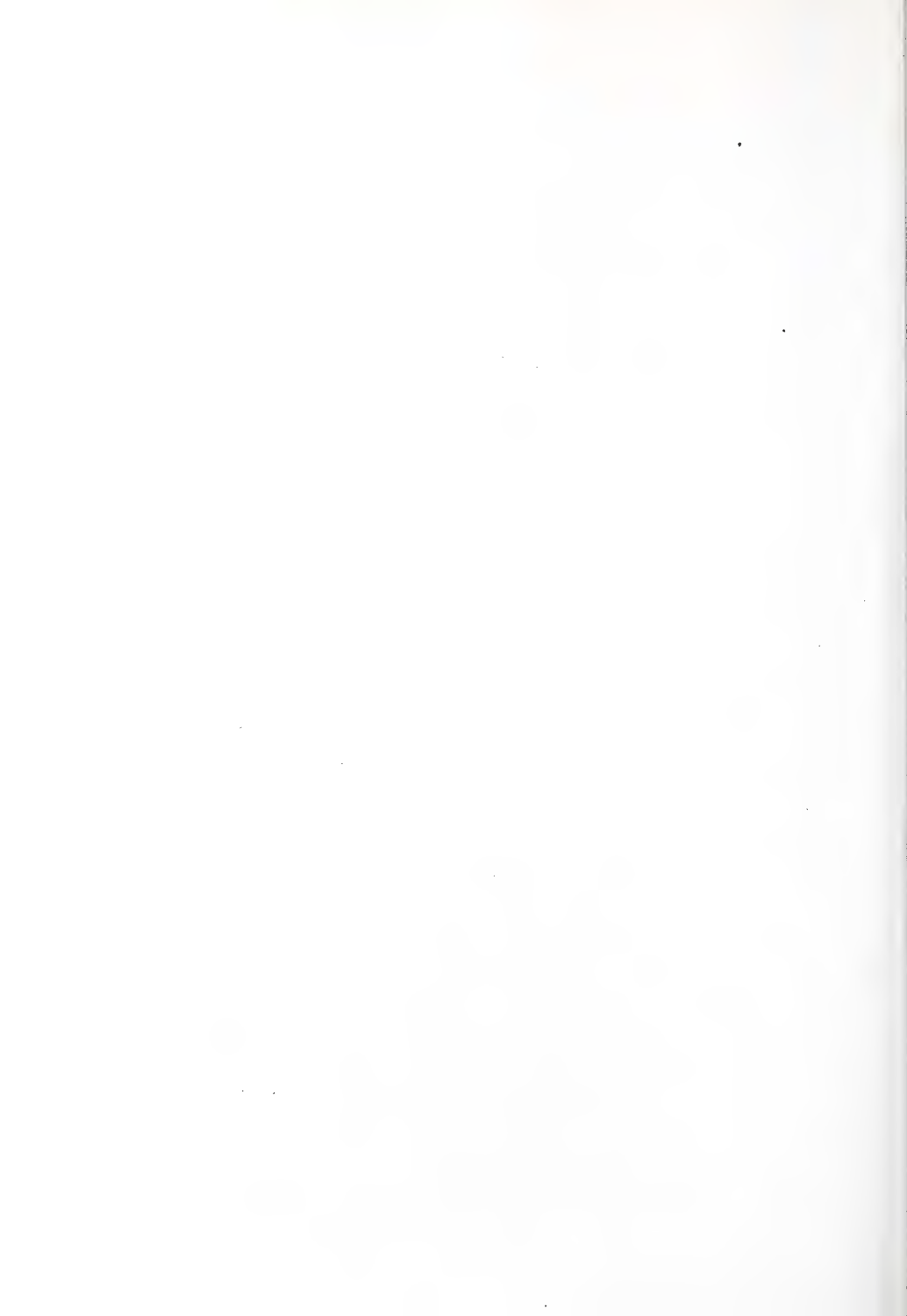


love, etc., commended to them the exercise of prophecy in his absence, and designed those whom he thought most fit to it, viz. the Governor, Mr. Dudley, and Mr. Nowell the elder. Then he desired the Governor to commend himself and the rest to God by prayer; which being done, they accompanied him to the boat; and so they went over to Charlestown, to go by land to the ship. This ship set sail from Salem April 1, and arrived at London (all safe), April 29." The apostle Eliot filled the vacancy caused by the absence of Mr. Wilson. The famous Roger Williams lays claim to the first invitation to fill this post. The statement, however, rests on his own assertion, and we find no corroboration of it on the church records or elsewhere. The reason he gives for declining the honor is perhaps worth noticing, as coming from a man so noted for his liberality in religion; he says it was because they (members of First Church) would not humble themselves for having held communion with the Church of England.

Mr. Wilson took with him to England a letter from Deputy-Governor Dudley to the Countess of Lincoln,—one of the most authentic documents touching upon this early period.¹ The date of it is March 12, 1630. It contains a very minute account of the condition of the colony. It begins:—

"For the satisfaction of your Honor and some friends, and for the use of such as shall hereafter intend to increase

¹ Young's *Chronicles of Massachusetts*, 304.



our Plantation in New-England, I have, in the throng of domestic, and not altogether free from public, business, thought fit to commit to memory our present condition, and what hath befallen us since our arrival here; which I will do shortly, after my usual manner, and must do rudely, having yet no table, nor other room to write in than by the fireside, upon my knee, in this sharp winter; to which my family must have leave to resort, though they break good manners and make me many times forget what I would say, and say what I would not."

He then proceeds to give an account of the hardships they endure:—

"The ships being gone, victuals wasting, and mortality increasing, we held divers fasts in our several congregations. But the Lord would not yet be deprecated; for about the beginning of September died Mr. Gager, a right godly man, a skilful chirurgeon, and one of the deacons of our congregation, Mr. Johnson, one of the five undertakers (the Lady Arbella, his wife, being dead a month before). This gentleman was a prime man amongst us, having the best estate of any, zealous for religion, and the greatest furtherer of this plantation."

And then, towards the close, he says:—

"But now, having some leisure to discourse of the motives for other men's coming to this place, or their abstaining from it, after my brief manner, I say this, that if any come hither to plant for worldly ends, that can live well at home, he commits an error, of which he will soon repent him; but if for spiritual, and that no particular obstacles hinder his removal, he may find here what may well content him, viz. materials to build, fuel to burn, ground to plant, seas and rivers to fish in, a pure air to breathe in, good water to drink, till wine or beer can be made, which,



together with the cows, hogs, and goats brought hither already, may suffice for food; for as for fowl and venison, they are dainties here as well as in England. For clothes and bedding they must bring them with them, till time and industry produce them here. In a word, we yet enjoy little to be envied, but endure much to be pitied, in the sickness and mortality of our people. . . . If any godly men, out of religious ends, will come over to help us in the good work we are about, I think they cannot dispose of themselves nor of their estates more to God's glory and the furtherance of their own reckoning. But they must not be of the poorer sort yet, for divers years; for we have found by experience that they have hindered, not furthered the work. And for profane and debauched persons, their oversight in coming hither is wondered at, where they shall find nothing to content them. If there be any endued with grace, and furnished with means to feed themselves and theirs for eighteen months, and to build and plant, let them come over into our Macedonia and help us, and not spend themselves and their estates in a less profitable employment. For others, I conceive, they are not yet fitted for this business."¹

Soon after Mr. Wilson's return from England, which took place on the 26th of May, some time in

¹ "1631, July 21. The governor, deputy-governor, and Mr. Nowell, the elder of the congregation at Boston, go to Watertown, to confer with Mr. Phillips the pastor and Mr. Brown the elder of the congregation there about an opinion they had published, that the churches of Rome were true churches; the matter is debated before many of both congregations, and by the approbation of all the assembly, except three, is concluded an error."—PRINCE'S *Annals of New England*, 358.

"1632, July 3. The congregation (i. e. the church) at Boston, wrote to the elders and brethren of the churches of Plymouth, Salem, etc., for their advice in three questions: First, whether one person might be a civil magistrate and a ruling elder at the same time? Second, if not, then which should he lay down? Third, whether there might be divers pastors in the same church? The first was agreed by all negatively, the second and third doubtful."—*Ibid.* 398.



the month of August, 1632, the congregation of Boston and Charlestown began to build the first meeting-house. The situation chosen was on the south side of State Street, in Boston, where Brazer's Building now stands.¹ The walls were of stone, plastered with clay, and the roof thatched. This building, together with a parsonage² erected at the same time on what was formerly known as Wilson's Lane, in the immediate neighborhood of the church, was provided for by contributions amounting in all to £120. The winter, which was now setting in, proved so severe that passage over the river was often impracticable. This, no doubt, hastened the inevitable separation. The church in Charlestown became a distinct body on the 2d of November, 1632, withdrawing from the parent church about one fourth of the congregation. "Those of the church who stayed behind still retained their relation to the [old church] until October, 1632; when those members desiring a dismissal from the congregation, to enter into a new church-body at Charlestown, and having first sought solemnly unto God, with the rest of the church, for direction herein, they were accordingly dismissed upon the 14th day of the said month."³

¹ "A plan of the church lot as existing at this time, but as made out by Francis Jackson of late years, is in the library of the New England Historical and Genealogical Society. See the Register, April, 1860, 152." — *Memo-rial History of Boston* (1880), Vol. I. 119, note.

² Wilson lived on the corner opposite where the Merchants' Bank stands, before the land on which his house stood was taken to widen the street.

³ "1632, November 2 (Friday). Mr. Increase Nowell, Mr. Thomas James, and other Church members at Charlestown, who had been dismissed from the



"And now upon this separation," says Foxcroft, in his centennial sermon in 1730, "I find the number of males in the church of Boston (after nine years' continuance here, in which time, doubtless, additions were made to it) amounted but to about seventy or eighty, the body of the inhabitants." Endeavors were at this time made to obtain the apostle Eliot for teacher, and there is very good reason to suppose that he would have accepted, had he not felt bound by an agreement made on the passage over from England to settle in Roxbury.¹

"The 22d of November was solemnized as a fast, on which Mr. Wilson, hitherto the teacher, was ordained the pastor of the church. At the same time Mr. Oliver was chosen ruling elder, and two deacons were elected; on all of whom hands were imposed as a token of designation.

"On Aug. 6, 1633," about a month before the arrival of Cotton, the colleague of Wilson, "one hundred and thirty men and ninety women had become members of the church. But, besides the loss of the Charlestown members, several had died, several others had removed to Salem, and a few had

church at Boston, now embody into a (new) distinct Congregational Church, enter into covenant; and (the said) Mr. James is elected and ordained their pastor." — *PRINCE'S Annals of New England*, 407.

¹ "Mr. John Eliot, a member of Boston congregation, and one whom the congregation intended presently to call to the office of teacher, was called to be a teacher to the church at Roxbury; and though Boston laboured all they could, both with the congregation of Roxbury, and with Mr. Eliot himself, alleging their want of him, and the covenant between them, &c., yet he could not be diverted from accepting the call of Roxbury, November 5. So he was dismissed." — *WINTHROP'S Journal*, Vol. I. 93.



returned to Salem. Probably the church did not now number more than a hundred communicants. Four children were baptized in the first year, eleven in the second, three in the third, and four in that part of the fourth which elapsed before Mr. Cotton's ordination. Of these twenty-two there were eleven of each sex."

We have now witnessed the transplanting of the church from Charlestown to Boston, — the little seed out of which grew up such an abundant harvest. We find the congregation somewhat diminished, it is true, but from no internal causes. That harmony of thought and purpose of which Foxcroft speaks so glowingly in 1730 was to remain unbroken for nearly two centuries. It was not till after the dawn of the nineteenth century that the ties were to be severed.

Our congregation, small as it was, constituted the bulk of the population of Boston. The influence which it had on the government of the colony may well be imagined when we consider that no one was a freeman until he became a member of a church;¹ that the minister was always consulted by the Governor in any important emergency, and very often his decision entirely settled the matter.

The growth of our church, from the foundation down to the present time, and the various changes

¹ "We must be careful to bear in mind, however, that when this provision was passed, viz. in May, 1631, Massachusetts was a little community of traders, having no semblance to a state," so that the hardship of the deprivation did not count for much till the latter condition was realized. — DEXTER'S *Congregationalism of the last Three Hundred Years, etc.*, 420 et seq.

which have taken place in the sentiments of the worshippers, during a period of two centuries and a half, open up another field of inquiry more properly included in a later period of our history. All that concerns us in this connection is simply to hint at the origin and foundation of this church.

Who that reflects for one moment on the manner of this planting will feel the least surprised at the result? But will he not have reason to be proud of that result? Built on a sure foundation, the ark of the Lord has continued during the space of two centuries and a half. The same covenant, the same principles of purity and liberty which our fathers established, have come down to us from generation to generation, shedding their blessings not only on our own body of worshippers, but on the whole community. Well may such an influence be called one of the "distinguishing glories of New England."

And now, before we close this chapter, let us take a glance at the mode of church worship and government peculiar to the Puritans. The order of worship was common to all the churches, with perhaps some slight variations. That of Boston Church is thus described. "Every Sabbath, or Lord's day, they come together at Boston by wringing of a bell,¹

¹ At first by beat of the drum. For an account of the various ways (at first of necessity) resorted to for summoning people to the meeting, e. g. by blowing a shell or horn, and raising a flag, — methods resorted to as late as the middle of the last century, — see an interesting note to Dexter's Congregationalism, 452.

about nine of the clock or before. The Pastor begins with solemn prayer continuing about a quarter of an houre. The Teacher then readeth and expoundeth a chapter; then a Psalme is sung, which ever one of the ruling Elders dictates. After that the Pastor preacheth a sermon, and sometimes extempore exhort. Then the Teacher concludes with prayer and a blessing." Once a month they observed the Lord's Supper, of which notice was given a fortnight in advance. The ministers and ruling elders sat at the table, the rest in their seats or upon forms. The afternoon service began at two o'clock. The pastor began as before noon; a psalm was sung, and the teacher preached his sermon. After and before the sermon was a prayer. Then followed baptism, if there was any. After this ceremony a contribution was taken up; one of the deacons saying, "Brethren of the congregation, now there is time left for contribution, wherefore as God hath prospered you, so freely offer." The magistrates and chief gentlemen then passed up, followed by the elders, and after them the rest of the congregation, one by one, all the men and all single persons, widows, and women in absence of their husbands, and deposited their offerings in a wooden box in charge of the deacon, if money or papers promising money; if anything more bulky, then to one side;¹

¹ "I have seen a faire gilt cup with a cover, offered there by one, which is still used at the Communion." — LECHFORD'S *Plain Dealing*, 15. This cup may still be among the valuable collection of church silver, and, if so, would rival in antiquity the famous Winthrop cup.

and, after doing this, passed another way back to their seats.¹ Then followed admission of members and hearing of complaints. If not too late, they sang a psalm, and then the pastor closed with a prayer and blessing. "Upon the week dayes, there are Lectures in divers townes, and in Boston, upon Thursdayes, when Master Cotton teacheth out of the Revelation."²

As for the form of church government, "Every church hath power of government in, and by itselffe, and no church, or Officers, have power over one another but by way of advice or counsaile, voluntarily given or besought, saving that the General Court, now and then, over-rule some church matters; and of late, divers of the Ministerie have had set meetings to order church matters; whereby it is conceived they tend towards Presbyterian rule."³

The governing body of officers has already been alluded to, together with their proper functions. The church endeavored to rule as much as possible by unanimous consent. But where they could not agree, as, for example, on the admission or censure of a member, the matter was referred to a select council

¹ Until 1710, and even later, careful attention was given to the seating of people in meeting, with reference to social or civil dignity.

² Winthrop's Journal gives the earliest notice of this lecture.

³ The first synod, or council of ministers and others, was held at Cambridge (then Newtown), the 30th of August, 1637, and just escaped dealing with the famous Hutchinsonian controversy, which came up before the General Court two months later. John Cotton, the "patriarch of New England," at that time teacher of the church, attended with John Wilson, pastor, as messengers to the council. John Davenport, first of New Haven, afterwards of Boston Church, was also one of the twenty-five ministers summoned. See Chap. II.



to hear and pass upon privately, or in presence of such of the brethren as saw fit to attend. The rules of admission and expulsion were very strict, as instance the following, from the church records: —

“The 17th of y^e 5th Moneth (1636). Thomas Matson, formerly received by Communion of churches, but now as a member vpon y^e confession of his fayth & repentance & pfessed subjection to y^e Lord Jesus Christ according to y^e Covenant of the Gospell, was admitted.

“The 24th of y^e same 5th Moneth Robert Parker o^r brother whoe was Excommunicate y^e 6^e of y^e 10th Moneth (1635) for scandalous oppression of his wives children in selling away their inheritance from y^m & other hard vsage both of her & y^r was this day vpon pfession of his repentance received againe to y^e fellowship of ye Church.”

“The 29th day of y^e 2^d Moneth 1638. Anne Walker y^e wife of one Richard Walker & sometime y^e wife & widdowe of o^r Brother Robert Houlton having before this day beene often privately Admonished of sundry *Scandalls*, as of Drunkenish, Intemperate, & vncleane or wantonish behaviors, & likewise of Cruelty towards her children & also of manifold lyes & still to this day psisting impenitently therein, was therefore now wth Joynt Consent of y^e Congregation Cast out of y^e Church.”

“The 13th of y^e 11th Moneth (1638). Our brother Richard Wayte having purloyned out of buckskyn lether brought vnto him, soe much thereof as would make 3. mens gloves to y^e Scandall of sundry wthout, as well as of his brethren, & also having beene by some of y^e brethren dealt wth all for it, did often deny & forswear y^e same, wthout harkening to their Convincings according to y^e Rule, or to y^e Church to w^{ch} it was brought, was therefore this day, wth Joynt Consent of y^e Congregation, Cast out of y^e Church.

“The 26th day of y^e same 9th Moneth (1639) being a day of *Publique fast* for our Congregation, our brother Mr



Robert Keayne was Admonisht by o^r Pasto^r in y^e Name of y^e Church for selling his wares at excessive Rates, to y^e Dishono^r of Gods Name, y^e Offence of y^e Generall Co^rt, & y^e Publique Scandall of y^e Cuntry."

"The 8^t Day of y^e s^d 1st Moneth 1640. Also, o^r Sistar Temperance Sweete y^e wife of one John Sweete was by o^r Pasto^r (in y^e Name of y^e Lord & wth y^e Consent of y^e Church (taken by their silence) Admonisht for having received into house & given entertainm^t vnto disorderly Company & ministring vnto y^m wine & strong waters even vnto Drunkenesse & y^t not wthout some iniquity both in y^e measure & pryce thereof." ¹

Another instance is that of a gentlewoman who was excommunicated for saying: "A brother and others she feared, did conspire to arbitrate the price of Joyners work of a chamber too high, and endeavoring to bring the same into Civill Cognizance, not proceeding to take two or three to convince the party, and so to tell the Church, (though the first told the party of it) and this without her husband."

Still another instance is that of a good woman who was severely dealt with because she absented herself from meeting more than was thought proper. Her reason for doing so was, in brief, because she did not like the kind of preaching she heard. It mattered not which of the two powers, civil or ecclesiastical, first got jurisdiction. They both proceeded to try the cause, *pari* or *non pari passu*. The views of church government and order, at first indeterminate, were, by the powerful influence of John Cotton and others, embodied in a platform

¹ Church Records, 8 et seq.

or religious constitution, called the Cambridge Platform, afterwards tacitly adopted as authority in all questions relating to church government. The power of the church made itself felt in those days against all who refused to conform to the established tenets.

Any such offender was first admonished, and then, if he did not obey, was excommunicated, and thereafter had no more rights than an Indian. It is curious to note how even the great John Cotton, leader of the church and expounder of religion, barely escaped censure for the sympathy which he was supposed to have secretly entertained for the views of the famous Anne Hutchinson. If we seek for the causes of this antagonism, they will be found in the temper of the age. The disorder, of which Puritan intolerance was the exponent in New England, was prevalent all over Christendom. All the religious world was busy trying to separate the chaff from the wheat. In New England, baptized in freedom of religion, they had not yet wrought out the problem how to unite toleration with a vigorous defence of the truth. It was still the age of witchcraft as well as of reformation. As long as the spirit of the former was abroad in the land, so long must the intolerance of the latter remain.

And yet, even in New England, allowance must be made for the peculiar kind of experiment that was set on foot. No scheme of the kind had ever before been attempted. "By charter from the Eng-



lish crown, the land was theirs as against all other civilized people, and they had a right to choose according to their own rules the associates who should help them to occupy and govern it. Exercising this right, they determined that magistracy and citizenship should belong only to Christian men, ascertained to be such by the best test which they knew how to apply."¹ All who could not come up to their standard were excluded, and if any persisted in staying where they were not wanted, more effective measures were tried. From this point of view the charge of intolerance perhaps could hardly be made out.

As we look back on that early church in the wilderness, with its noble company of worshippers, we strive in vain to recall a like picture. The severe aspect of the structure called a meeting-house,² rudely fashioned from clay and stone, and thatched from the weather, must have been in marked contrast with what its occupants had been accustomed to at home, and in only too sad keeping with the stern lot they had encountered from the moment of setting foot on this virgin soil.

And that goodly company of men and women gathered within its sacred walls! Winthrop, Dudley, Humphrey, Vane, Endicott, are but a few of those most readily called to mind, whose presence

¹ Dexter's *Congregationalism*, 420, note.

² "Our fathers, from conscience, called their houses for worship 'meeting-houses.'" — DEXTER'S *Congregationalism*, 454.



filled this little sanctuary, and whose delight it was to sit and listen to John Cotton as he unfolded the Scriptures for their guidance and action.

We, whose happy lot it is to enjoy the fruits of their hard labors, can form but a faint conception of the struggle it must have cost even these sturdy zealots, to abandon their old home with its precious memories and associations, all that they held most dear, and with a wilderness around them, set themselves about a task full of nothing but anxieties and uncertainties. We lose sight of the great responsibility they thereby incurred, — leaders in a vast enterprise, with no rule of action to guide them, and a wilderness to tame before them. We call them over-zealous, over-firm, narrow, and bigoted. This is the repelling side of their nature. Take a different view, and we shall find that these Puritan fathers were good and faithful men, "blameless and exemplary in character and life," and founders of a godly commonwealth. "The household purity, the domestic fidelity, the family discipline, the industry, thrift, and steadily increasing prosperity," of the Bay Colony, are all the fruits of their influence.

While we may be tempted to find fault with their *ways and methods*, let us not keep out of sight their true and noble natures.

CHAPTER II.

1633-1652.

JOHN COTTON.

Arrival of Cotton. — His Installation as Teacher. — Life of Cotton. — Boston Association of Congregational Ministers. — Cotton's Influence. — Salaries of the Ministers, how provided for. — Sympathy for the Indians. — Discussion about Veils. — Dispute with Roger Williams. — Dismissal from First Church doubted by some of Charlestown. — Rules of Doctrine laid down by Cotton. — Unsuccessful Attempt to reduce the Number of Lectures. — Ministers appointed to "deal" with Eliot. — Convince him of Error. — Cotton helps to save the Common. — Council of Ministers at Boston. — Endicott admonished for defacing the Crosses. — Return of Wilson. — Arrival of Vane and Norton. — Formation of Cambridge Church. — Fast proclaimed in all the Churches. — Growth of Liberalism. — Sermon by Peter. — Hutchinsonian Controversy. — Trouble with Wheelwright. — Banishment of Mrs. Hutchinson. Attempt to reclaim her, and to admonish her Son Francis Hutchinson. — Banishment of Underhill. — Collins and Hutchinson Fined. — Keayne dealt with for Overcharging. — Building of Second House of Worship. — Ministers called to Westminster Assembly. — La Tour. — Gorton. — Death of Winthrop. — Discontent in Hingham. — Mission to Bermuda. — Gathering of Second Church.

THIS period in the history of First Church is amply chronicled by Winthrop in his "Journal of New England." Following the lead of a distinguished biographer,¹ "instead of diluting it into a mixture from which all the pungency and raciness

¹ Campbell's *Lives of the Lord Chancellors of England*, Vol. I. 66.



would evaporate, I think I shall much better convey an accurate notion of the character of the individual, and of the manners of the times, by a liberal transcript of a few of the most remarkable passages of this interesting work."

"1633], Sept. 4." Arrived the "Griffin," having on board John Cotton. "They gat out of England with much difficulty, all places being belaid to have taken Mr. Cotton and Mr. Hooker, who had been long sought for to have been brought into the high commission; but the master being bound to touch at the Wight, the pursuivants attended there, and, in the meantime, the said ministers were taken in at the Downs."

"On Saturday evening the congregation [of Boston] met in their ordinary exercise, and Mr. Cotton, being desired to speak to the question (which was of the church), he showed, out of the Canticles, 6, that some churches were as queens, some as concubines, some as damsels, and some as doves, &c. He was then (with his wife) propounded to be admitted a member. The Lord's day following, he exercised in the afternoon, and being to be admitted, he signified his desire and readiness to make his confession according to order, which he said might be sufficient in declaring his faith about baptism (which he then desired for his child, born in their passage, and therefore named Scaborn). He gave two reasons why he did not baptize it at sea, (not for want of fresh water, for he held, sea water would have served;) 1, because they had no settled congregation there; 2, because a minister hath no power to give the seals but in his own congregation. He desired his wife might also be admitted a member, and gave a modest testimony of her, but withal requested, that she might not be put to make open confession, &c., which he said was against the apostle's



rule, and not fit for women's modesty; but that the elders might examine her in private. So she was asked, if she did consent in the confession of faith made by her husband, and if she did desire to be admitted, &c.; whereto she answered affirmatively; and so both were admitted, and their child baptized, the father presenting it (the child's baptism being, as he did then affirm, in another case, the father's incentive for the help of his faith, &c.)."

"17]. The governour and council met at Boston, and called the ministers and elders of all the churches [Salem, Watertown, Dorchester, and Roxbury] to consider about Mr. Cotton his sitting down. He was desired to divers places, and those who came with him desired he might sit down where they might keep store of cattle; but it was agreed, by full consent, that the fittest place for him was Boston, and in that respect those of Boston might take farms in any part of the bay not belonging to other towns; and that (keeping a lecture) he should have some maintenance out of the treasury. But divers of the counsel, upon their second thoughts, did after refuse this contribution."

"October 10]. A fast was kept at Boston, and Mr. Leverett,¹ an ancient, sincere professor, of Mr. Cotton's congregation in England, was chosen a ruling elder, and Mr. Firmin, a godly man, an apothecary of Sudbury in England, was chosen deacon, by imposition of hands; and Mr. Cotton was then chosen teacher of the congregation of Boston, and ordained by imposition of the hands of the presbytery, in this manner: First, he was chosen by all the congregation, testifying their consent by erection of hands. Then Mr. Wilson, the pastor, demanded of him, if he did accept of that call. He paused, and then spake to this effect: that howsoever he knew himself unworthy and

¹ N. E. Hist. and Geneal. Reg. (1850) 121. "He died the 3 : of ye 2^{mo}, 1650, having been an useful man both to the church and town."—*Church Records*, 258.

unsufficient for that place; yet, having observed all the passages of God's providence, (which he reckoned up in particular) in calling him to it, he could not but accept it. Then the pastor and the two elders laid their hands upon his head, and the pastor prayed, and then taking off their hands, laid them on again, and, speaking to him by his name, they did thenceforth design him to the said office, in the name of the Holy Ghost, and did give him the charge of the congregation, and did thereby (as by a sign from God) indue him with the gifts fit for his office; and lastly did bless him. Then the neighboring ministers, which were present, did (at the pastor's motion) give him the right hand of fellowship, and the pastor made a stipulation between him and the congregation."

LIFE OF COTTON.

Cotton came of a good and ancient family. He was the eldest son of Rowland Cotton, a lawyer of Derby in Derbyshire, England; was born in that town on December 4, 1585, and baptized the 15th of the same month. The son of a Puritan father, he naturally imbibed his parent's strict religious views and doctrine. In the year 1598, at the age of thirteen, he entered Trinity College, Cambridge (preferred by Puritans to Oxford), where he received his degree of B. A. in 1602-3,¹ and that of M. A. in 1606. From Trinity he went to Emmanuel College, and there became, successively, fellow, dean, catechist, and head lecturer. He had by this time

¹ The records of Trinity do not extend so far back as the date of his first degree; but his M. A. is recorded, and from that the former can be deduced with reasonable certainty.

acquired a great reputation for scholarship. His degree of B. D. was received at Emmanuel.

"SUPPLICAT FOR B. D.¹

"Coll Eman: —

"Supplicat Reverentiis vestris
Johannes Cotton ut studium 7
annorum in Sacrà Theologiã
postquam rexit in Artibus
una cum omnibus Oppositionibus,
Responsionibus, Sermonibus, cæterisque
Exercitiis per Statuta Regia requisitis
sufficiat et tam, ad opponendum quam
ad intrandum in eadem Sacrà
Theologiã."

"GUILIELMUS SANDCROFT."

He was chosen to fill the office of vicar of St. Botolph's Church in Old Boston on June 24, 1612. The following is the entry on the corporation records: —

"Mr. John Cotton, Master, of Arts, is now elected vicar of this Borough, in the room and place of Mr. Wooll, the late incumbent, for that Mr. Alexander upon whom it was purposed to bestow the vicarage has yielded up the same.

¹ His sermons at the University, at first, were more calculated to charm the intellect than to refresh the soul. "He was at last awakened," says George Hood (who derives the account from Cotton Mather), in his little sketch of Cotton, appended to his "History of Music in New England," "by hearing a sermon from Dr. Sibbs, on the misery of those who have but a negative righteousness. This was the means of turning not only his heart towards vital religion, but his whole course of action for life. From this time he preached Christ and him crucified. But it cost him his fame at the University. The wits and scholars were unwilling to hear the truth, and the Vice-Chancellor no longer offered him the hand of friendship." — *Ibid.*, 205. Dr. William Everett discusses the subject in a poem on "Cotton in the Pulpit at St. Mary's," delivered at the recent celebration of the 250th anniversary of First Church in Boston. — *The Commemoration by the First Church in Boston, etc.* (1881), 132.

Mr. Cotton is to have his presentation forthwith sealed, and to have the same stipend and allowance, that Mr. Wooll had."

His election came about in a curious way. The ballots were evenly divided between Cotton and one other candidate. The mayor had the casting vote, and did not favor Cotton, but curiously enough twice made the mistake of voting for him. When he called for a third ballot to rectify his error, they refused his request, whereupon the choice fell upon Cotton, through the blunder of his most ardent opponent.¹ Soon after his settlement at Old Boston he went to Cambridge to receive his degree of Bachelor of Divinity. In 1613 the parish register of Balsham, County of Cambridge, records his marriage with Elizabeth Horrocks of Cambridge. "Contractora nomina Ann^o Dom. 1613 Johannes Cotton de Boston cler^c in Theolog. Baccalaureus and Elizabetha Horrocks de Cantab: Sigel. nupti July 3." He continued in his labors at Old Boston for nearly twenty years, preaching with marked success. Great numbers of people came from all parts to hear him, till at last his fame reached the ears of Bishop Laud. That persecutor of the Puritans made no exception in his case, but strove hard to have him arrested for non-conformity. The crisis came shortly after his second marriage to Sarah Story in Old Boston, April 25, 1632. In 1631 he had been obliged to give up preaching on account

¹ Cotton Mather's Life of Cotton.

of a severe indisposition, and for a short time found a residence with the Earl of Lincoln, the father of the Lady Arbella, whose brief and romantic career has been previously mentioned.¹ While there he performed the duties of chaplain, and in April, 1631, lost his first wife.

Hutchinson says that Cotton had been threatened several times with proceedings for non-conformity, but that Thomas Leverett² made intercession and got him off. One instance is worth mentioning, because of its close resemblance to an event in our early colonial history. In 1621 he was accused, with others, of a "very evil done and dangerous matter." Somebody had cut off the tops of two crosses which adorned the maces carried before the mayor of Boston, just as in our early colonial times Governor Endicott defaced what he regarded as an "idolatrous emblem" in the royal ensign. After repeated trials of the case Cotton was found to have had no connection with this affair.

Warrant for his arrest was finally procured through the entry of a complaint for quite a different object. A "dissolute person in Boston, who had been punished by the magistrates, strove to revenge himself by informing against them before the High Commissioners' Court in London; that they did not kneel at the sacrament, nor observe some other ceremonies which the law prescribed. He was told

¹ *Ante*, Chap. I. 4.

² Chosen ruling elder of Boston Church October 10 (O. S.), 1633.

he must put in the minister's name; he replied, 'The minister is an honest man, and never did me any wrong;' but upon entreaty, he put in Mr. Cotton's name, and letters missive were immediately sent to him to summon him before the Court." The Earl of Dorset, a warm friend and devoted admirer of Cotton, at his request, made intercession in this emergency, but without success. He was forced to reply to his friend's appeal, "that if he had been guilty of drunkenness, uncleanness, or any such lesser fault, he could have obtained his pardon; but as he was guilty of Puritanism and non-conformity the crime was unpardonable; and therefore he advised him to flee for his safety." Soon after the warrant was issued, Cotton sent in his letter of resignation, dated May 7, 1633, to the Bishop of Lincoln, who duly accepted the same.¹ According to the corporation records, the date of the acceptance of his resignation was in July, as will appear by the following:—

"1633, July 22. Mr. Cotton having yielded up his place of being vicar by his letters dated in the same month, which his friends, this house, have accepted, Mr. Thomas Coney (Mr. Cotton's brother-in-law) stated, that the Bishop had declared the vicarage void, and the Mayor and burgesses might, when they pleased, present some able person thereto. Mr. Anthony Tuckney was thereupon elected vicar, at a stipend of 80*l.* per annum."

His only object now was to avoid arrest. Before taking passage for New England he found a tem-

¹ Hutchinson's Collection of Papers, 249.

porary refuge in London, and there came in contact with several of the "temporizing sort," who endeavored to make him practise a feigned conformity; but instead of yielding to the force of their arguments, he met their advances with such firmness as to cause them to alter their own practice.¹ His conduct on that occasion showed unusual strength of character. But we must not infer, from this single instance, that Cotton was always so decided in the expression of an opinion. In his long letter to the Bishop of Lincoln, written in 1624,² on the subject of Church ceremonies, we find no distinct avowal of his sentiments. We are left to infer that he was still in doubt as to the requirement of kneeling at the sacrament; but the statement which he made after he came to this country of his practice "many years before he left England" is decidedly opposed to this supposition. He says: "I forbore all the ceremonies alike at once, many years before I left England. The first grounds which prevailed with me to forbear one ceremony would not allow me to practise any." He then refers to an offer from the Bishop of Lincoln to give him liberty "upon once kneeling at sacrament with him at the next Lord's day after." But he adds, "I durst not accept his offer of liberty upon once kneeling."

The Bishop was favorably disposed towards Cot-

¹ One of these converts was John Davenport, who alludes to the subject in his *Life of Cotton*.

² A copy of it is given in Thompson's *History of Boston* (Eng.).

ton when complained of for non-conformity; and we must conclude that his friendly attitude induced the vicar to yield somewhat to the sense of his obligation.

A modern writer¹ has given the matter his special attention, and discusses somewhat at length the position assumed by Cotton with regard to the ceremonies of the Church. He says the vicar had an assistant at Old Boston (from 1618 to 1629 one Edward Wright; and in 1629 Anthony Tuckney), who performed all the ceremonies, including the most obnoxious ones of surplice, cross, and kneeling, without any interruption from the Puritan part of the congregation; but that, according to Cotton Mather, though Cotton attended at public sermons, he never did at the "common prayers of the conformable." Mather adds also the statement, that "for two years he was conformable, and for nineteen restive and dissentient."

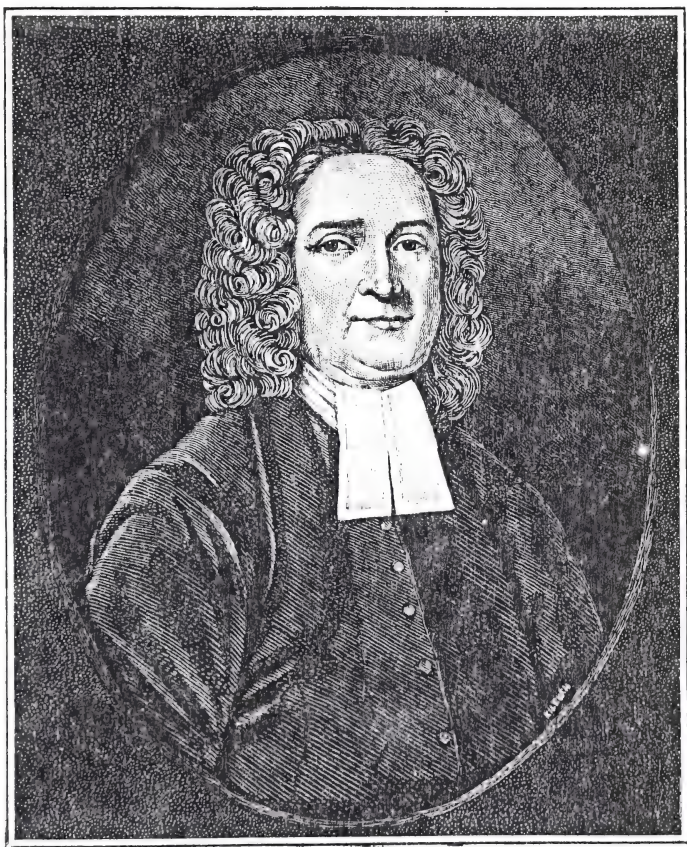
While in concealment at London he wrote a beautiful letter to his dear wife Sarah, dated October 3, 1632, previous to taking passage aboard the Griffin. He was some time in doubt whether to seek refuge in Holland, Barbadoes, or New England, but was finally moved to come here by letters from Winthrop on behalf of Boston Church. In order to elude the officers he had been obliged to change

¹ Dr. Nicholas Hoppin, in the *Church Monthly* for December, 1862, and January, 1863, who in support of his position, has taken the trouble to refer the writer to Cotton Mather's *Life* of his grandfather, and to the statement of Cotton himself, as quoted by Thompson in his *History of Boston* (Eng.).

his name and dress, and, as we have seen, escaped only by a happy chance. His departure from England and arrival at Boston have already been alluded to. The latter place seemed to be newly baptized at his coming, and the young but spreading colony soon felt and appreciated the weight of his influence. From the time of that arrival to the date of his death he labored unceasingly for its welfare. He has left the imprint of his character on his descendants of to-day.

In speaking of the amount of daily labor he was accustomed to perform, a well-known writer says it is simply appalling. Besides preaching, expounding, exhorting, settling cases of conscience, giving counsel on public affairs, and presiding over church discipline, he engaged in the learned controversies of the day, and wrote many books which became standard authorities. As opportunity offered, he went through the Bible, expounding it for doctrines and duties. He was in the midst of repeating this task when he died. Among his numerous services to the city of Boston, the important one of helping to save the public Common will, perhaps, earn for him the deepest gratitude of posterity.¹ In October, following his arrival, he established the Thursday Lecture, in continuation of that originated by him in Old Boston, which remained under the tutelage of the minister of First Church for over two cen-

¹ Winthrop's Journal, Vol. I. 152. Palfrey's History of New England, Vol. I. 379. Memorial History of Boston, Vol. I. 123.



Jos^d heartily in the Lord
of Cotton

turies, till finally given up at a recent date. The Election Sermon, begun in 1634, is said to have been established by him. As an expounder of the Bible — in his day the statute-book of the Commonwealth — he had no equal. But in the exercise of this function he made not the slightest show of arrogance. The statement that to him Boston owes her name is probably erroneous, as the record shows that the name was given three years before he came, in deference, probably, to some of the distinguished undertakers who came from Old Boston and had been concerned in its municipal affairs. His claim to be called the founder of the Boston Latin School has inferential evidence for its support.¹

His literary attainments were of the highest order. "He was a good Hebraist, critically versed in Greek, and wrote and spoke Latin with great facility, in a pure and elegant Ciceronian style, and was a good historian. His library was great, his reading and learning answerable, himself a living and better library."² "His voice," we are told, "was not loud, but clear and distinct, and easily heard in the most capacious auditory."

His personal appearance is thus described: "His

¹ Rev. R. C. Waterston, in Mass. Hist. Soc. Proceed., Vol. XII. 388-390, makes out a very strong claim in his favor, pointing to a very significant fact, namely, that Cotton formed one of a committee in Old Boston to choose an usher. The same writer has a very interesting article on Cotton in *Ibid.* (1867), 460.

² His grandson, Cotton Mather, says, "He was a most universal scholar, a living system of the liberal arts, and a walking library."

complexion was fair, sanguine, clear; his hair was once brown, but in his later years white as the driven snow. In his countenance was an inexpressible sort of majesty, which commanded respect from all that approached him. He was of medium stature, and inclined to corpulency."

Cotton's views regarding the observance of church ceremonies varied, as we have seen, from time to time. There is authority¹ for the statement that there was a time, during his ministry at Old Boston, when that place was not "decidedly Puritan." It appears probable, too, that Cotton was not always a "rigid non-conformist."² His letter to the Bishop of Lincoln, in 1624, shows his uncertain state of mind at that period. But however much he may have varied from the ritualistic requirements of the church at home, after his arrival in this country he became a decided Congregationalist, "using free prayer and an order of worship unlike that to which he had been wonted, and adopting, in the disuse of other forms identified with prelacy, the distinctive Puritan methods of church discipline."³

The following sentences illustrate his manner of spending Saturday evenings:—

¹ Rev. G. B. Blenkin, M. A., Prebendary of Lincoln, Vicar of Boston [1874] — *N. E. Hist. and Geneal. Reg.* (1874), 125.

² "It is clear that at the conclusion of Cotton's ministry in Boston the generality of the people had no conscientious scruples against conformity, even if they did not actually prefer it as the order of their worship."—DR. HOPKIN, in *Church Monthly*, *supra*.

³ The causes which brought about this radical change are discussed in the preface to this work.

M I L K F O R B A B E S.

D R A W N
Out of the Breasts of both
T E S T A M E N T S.

Chiefly, for the spirituall nourishment
of *Boston* Babes in either *England*:
But may be of like use for any
Children.

By JOHN COTTON, B. D.
*and Teacher to the Church of Bolton
in New-England.*

L O N D O N,
Printed by J. Coe, for Henry Overton,
and are to be sold at his Shop, in
Popes-head Alley.
1646.

"The Sabbath he kept most conscientiously from evening to evening; and it is supposed to be from his example that the custom prevailed so extensively in New England of 'resting according to the commandment' at the going down of Saturday's sun. When that evening arrived he made a larger exposition at family prayer than at other times. Then the children and servants were thoroughly exercised in the catechism, probably using such as were of his own preparation; one of which, called 'Milk for Babes,'¹ was used for feeding the minds of the New England children for many years after his death. Another, called 'Meat for Strong Men,' became their diet at a maturer age, 'and nourished them up in the words of faith and of good doctrine.' The catechising over, there followed prayer, and the singing of a psalm. Mr. Cotton then withdrew to his study, and its devotions, till the hour of repose."²

In 1651 Cotton preached the second Artillery Election Sermon.

Towards the close of his life Cotton had a brief correspondence with Oliver Cromwell. It appears "that the Parliament, that Oliver among and before them, had taken solemn anxious thought concerning Propagating of the Gospel in New England; and among other measures passed an act to that end. It is probably in spécial reference to this that Cotton has been addressing Oliver, — founding too on their general relationship as Soldier of the Gospel and Priest of the Gospel, high brother and humble one; appointed, both of them, to fight for

¹ See titlepage of Cotton's "Milk for Babes," heliotyped from the original of a copy in Dr. Deane's possession.

² McClure's Life of Cotton, 263.



it to the death, each with such weapons as were given him."

The following is the reply of the Lord Protector:¹—

For my esteemed Friend, Mr. Cotton, Pastor of the Church at Boston in New England: These.

[LONDON], 2d October, 1651.

WORTHY SIR, AND MY CHRISTIAN FRIEND, — I received yours a few days since. It was welcome to me, because signed by you, whom I love and honor in the Lord: but more [so] to see some of the same grounds of our Actings stirring in you that are in us, to quiet us in our work, and support us therein. Which hath had great difficulty in Scotland; by reason we have had to do with some who were, I very think, Godly, but through weakness and the subtlety of Satan, [were] involved against the Interests of the Lord and His People.

With what tenderness we have proceeded with such, and that in sincerity, our Papers (which I suppose you have seen) will in part manifest; and I give you some comfortable assurance of [the same]. The Lord hath marvellously appeared even against them. And now, again, when all the power was devolved into the Scottish King and the Malignant Party, — they invading England, the Lord rained upon them such snares as the Enclosed will show.

Only the Narrative is short in this, That of their whole Army, when the Narrative was framed, not five men were returned.

Surely, sir, the Lord is greatly to be feared and to be praised! We need your prayers in this as much as ever. How shall we behave ourselves after such mercies? What

¹ Oliver Cromwell's Letters and Speeches, CXXV. The original is found among the Ayscough MSS., No. 4156, folio 70, British Museum.



is the Lord a-doing? What Prophecies are now fulfilling? Who is a God like ours? To know His will, to do His will, are both of Him.

I took this liberty from business, to salute you thus in a word.

Truly I am ready to serve you and the rest of your Brethren and Churches with you. I am a poor, weak creature, and not worthy the name of a worm; yet accepted to serve the Lord and His People. Indeed, my dear Friend, between you and me, you know not me, — my weakness, my inordinate passions, my unskilfulness, and every-way unfitness to my work. Yet, yet the Lord, who will have mercy on whom He will, does as you see! Pray for me. Salute all Christian friends, though unknown.

I rest your affectionate friend to serve you,

OLIVER CROMWELL.

Cotton's death, on the 23d December, 1652, was said to have been caused by exposure to the wet, in crossing the ferry from Cambridge, after preaching to the students. He was buried in what has since been called the Cotton tomb, in the Chapel Burying Ground.¹ With the exception of Winthrop, no one was a greater loss to the town than Cotton. The colonists depended upon him for guidance, both in

¹ The First Church Tomb, commonly called the Cotton Tomb (although there are two of that name), in King's Chapel Burying Ground, is marked by a broad slate stone, on which are the following inscriptions: "Here Lye Intombed the Bodies of the Famous Reverend and Learned Pastors of the First Church of CHRIST in Boston, viz.: Mr. John Cotton, aged 67 years, Dec^r Decem^r the 23d, 1652. Mr. John Davenport, aged 72 years, Dec^r March the 15th, 1670. Mr. John Oxenbridge, aged 66 years, Dec^r December the 28, 1674. Mr. Thomas Bridge, aged 58 years, Dec^r September the 26, 1715." This tomb formerly belonged to Elder Oliver. — *Memorial History of Boston*, Vol. I. 555. The same ground also contains the dust of John Winthrop, Isaac Johnson, John Norton, and William Emerson, the last minister of the church who was there buried.



State and Church matters. He was emphatically what is called a political preacher, and governed by the Bible.

By his will, dated "30th of 9: 1652," he gave "to the Church of Boston a silver vessel, to be used amongst the other communion plate."

"In 1857 the Chapel of the Cathedral in Boston (Eng.) was restored, having been allowed to decay; and the occasion was made one of interest, as connected with the name of John Cotton." The local paper of that place thus noticed it:¹—

"It has long been a cause of surprise to many of the citizens of the United States, especially of Massachusetts, who visited in Boston (Eng.), that no memorial of Mr. Cotton was to be found in the church; and several of these visitors expressed a desire to contribute towards the erection of one.

"It was suggested, in 1854, that the chapel, now restored and reopened, would be a very desirable locality in which to place a memorial of Mr. Cotton; and a correspondence was opened with an eminent citizen (Hon. Edward Everett) of Boston, Mass., on the subject, which resulted in a very liberal and ample subscription to carry out the desired object, several of the subscribers being descendants of Mr. Cotton in the female line. The work of reparation was commenced in 1856, and has been complete and thorough. The chapel thus restored is about

¹ Many of the following extracts and letters are copied from a MS. Genealogy of the Cotton Family in England and America, collected and arranged by the late William Gray Brooks of Boston, a descendant of Cotton, and now in the possession of his son, the Rev. Phillips Brooks. Dr. Chauncy once said that "the famous Cotton had more learning and understanding than all that descended from him." We of a later generation at least will find no difficulty in qualifying that statement.



40 feet long by 18 broad. It was in a state of dilapidation, — the tracery of its very beautiful windows was sadly mutilated; the floor broken up and irregular; the roof in a very dangerous condition; the outer walls perished and decayed in a great measure, and the inner ones disfigured."

"The chapel was entirely repaired; and the eastern arch now contains a beautiful brass tablet, covered by a Latin inscription from Mr. Everett. The entire amount given by citizens of Massachusetts was £673 2s. 4d."

"A grand celebration of the event took place July 21, 1857, when the chapel was again opened, and is now known as the 'Cotton Chapel.'"¹

The following is a copy of the inscription by the Hon. Edward Everett in memory of Cotton: —

"In perpetuam JOHANNIS COTTONI memoriam

Hujus ecclesiæ multos per annos

Regnantibus Jacobo et Carolo Vicarii,

Gravis, disertî, docti, laboriosi;

Deinpropter res sacras in patriâ misere turbatas,

Novis sedibus in novo orbe quæsitis,

Ecclesiæ primariæ Bostoniæ Nov-Anglorum

Nomen hoc venerabile

In Cottoni honorem deducentis,

Vsque ad finem vitæ summâ laude

Summâque in rebus tam humanis quam divinis auctoritate

Pastoris et doctoris;

Annis cccxv post migrationem ejus peractis,

Prognati ejus civesque Bostonienses Americani

A fratribus Anglicis ad hoc pium munus provocati,

Ne viri eximii nomen

Utriusque orbis desiderii et decoris

Diutius a templo nobili exularet,

In qua per tot annos oracula divina

Diligenter docte sancteque enuntiavisset,

¹ A list of subscribers to the "Cotton fund" is given in N. E. Hist. and Geneal. Reg. (1874), 15.



Hoc sacellum restaurandum et hanc tabulam ponendam
Anno salutis recuperatæ CIJ. ICCCC. LV.
Libenter grate curaverunt."¹

During the short residence of Henry Vane in Boston he lived with Cotton, and made an addition to the house, which he left to the teacher on his departure. This house stood on the lot now occupied by Tremont Row, and near the southeast corner of the entrance to Pemberton Square. The ancient structure was standing, and called the oldest house in Boston, until swept away by the march of improvement in 1835. The rear part retained its old-fashioned appearance to the very last, having small casements and diamond panes in leaden sashes, the latter being hung on hinges and opening outwards.

In the "Book of Possessions" is recorded:—

"Mr. John Cotton, 1 house and garden and about half an acre of land with an acre adjoining, bounded with Sudbury (now Tremont Row) east, Bendall north, the Centurie hill west, and Mr. Bellingham south. This situation was long called 'Cotton's Hill.'

"In his will, proved Jan. 27, 1652/3, he says: 'And because the south part of my house, which Sir Henry Vane built while he sojourned with me, he by a deed gaue it at his departure to my son Seaborne, I do therefore leaue it unto him as by right, &c. — He also mentions his wife's house and garden in the market place in Boston (England). — If his wife and children die without heirs, or if they shall transplant themselves from hence into Old England, then my will is, and I give the farm at Muddy

¹ N. E. Hist. and Gen. Reg. (1874), 15.



River¹ (now Brookline), one half to the College and one half to the Church.' This farm included the two estates now or recently in possession of John Kendrick and Moses Andrew. Besides his son Scaborne, he left devisees, Sarah, wife of Richard Mather, Mariah, wife of Increase Mather, and John Cotton, who in 1664 confirmed this devise to Scaborne, and he sells the part to John Hull, the instrument of sale, on parchment, being in possession of N. I. Bowditch, Esq., of this city. Mr. Hull, who was mint master of the Colony, afterwards purchased the other rights. He died in 1683, and the division in 1684 embraced the lands in Boston known as 'Cotton's Hill,' commonly so called. These premises afterwards descended to Mr. Hull's only daughter, Hannah, wife of Samuel Sewall.

"The west line of Cotton's estate extended back as far as the estate now occupied by the Mt. Vernon Church (Rev. Samuel E. Herrick's) in Ashburton Street. Its north line ran 630 feet in a straight course to Tremont Row, including all the central portion of what is now Pemberton Square. This estate, after the death of Samuel Sewall in 1729, descended to his daughter Judith, who married William Cooper, and, after her death the premises were conveyed to William Vassall in 1758. In 1790 Patrick Jaffrey became owner; he married Madam Haley. It was afterwards owned by Jonathan Mason, and finally by Gardner Greene in 1803.

¹ "14th 10^m, 1635. At a publick meeting of y^e Inhabitants of Boston, It is agreed y^t Mr W^m Colburn, M^r W^m Aspinwall, M^r Jno. Sanford, W^m Balstone & Richard Wright, or four of them, shall lay out at Muddy River, a sufficient Allotment for a farm for o^r Teacher, M^r John Cotton.

"1st 9th 10^m, 1636. At a Meeting of y^e Select men of Boston, It was agreed y^t o^r Teacher, M^r John Cotton, shal have unto his Lott at Muddy River, all y^e ground Lying between y^e two Brooks, next to William Colemans allotment there, & so to y^e other end, unto y^e shortest over cutt beyond y^e Hill, towards y^e Norwest." See Notes in the fly-leaves of the Maria Cotton Bible, *infra*.



"His whole estate, which he enjoined should be appraised at a fair value, amounted to £2,843 19s. 3d."¹

The following epitaph on Cotton is said to have been composed by B. Woodbridge (H. C., 1642):—

"A Living, Breathing *Bible*; Tables where
Both *Covenants*, at Large, engraven were;
Gospel and *Law*, in's Heart, had each its Column;
His Head an Index to the Sacred Volume;
His very Name a *Title Page*; and next,
His Life a *Commentary* on the Text.
O, What a Monument of Glorious Worth,
When, in a *New Edition*, he comes forth,
Without *Errata's*, may we think he'll be
In *Leaves* and *Covers* of Eternity!"²

"Twenty-one of the descendants of John Cotton in the male line (besides the many through male or female of the Mather blood, and many granddaughters and other females) had been in 1818 graduated at Harvard, of whom two thirds were clergymen.

"His widow married Richard Mather; she deceased May 27, 1676."

The marriage settlement of Richard Mather and Sarah Cotton is on record in the Probate Office, Boston, dated July 28, 1654:—

"Mr. Richard Mather, Pastor to the Church of Dorchester, was married to Mrs. Sarah Cotton, Widdow, 26: 6: 56, by John Endicott, Gov'."—*Original Record*.

The old record book of births and deaths in Boston gives the following:—

¹ W. G. Brooks's MS. Genealogy of Cotton.

² Sibley, Harvard Graduates, Vol. I. 27.



"Seaborne, sonne of John Cotton and Sarah his wife, was borne 12" (6), 1633 (married, first, Dorothy Bradstreet; second, Prudence Crosby).

"Sarahiah, daughter of John Cotton and Sarah his wife, was borne 12" (7), 1635 (died Jan. 20, 1649-50; betrothed to Jon^a Mitchell).

"Elizabeth, daughter of John Cotton and Sarah his wife, was borne 9" (10), 1637 (baptized Dec. 10, 1637; married Jeremiah Eggerton, died Aug. 31, 1656).

"John, sonne of John Cotton and Sarah his wife, was borne 15" (1), 1639 (married Joanna Rossiter).

"Mariah, daughter of John Cotton and Sarah his wife, was borne 16" (12), 1641 (married Rev. Increase Mather)." ¹

Soon after the arrival of Cotton originated what afterwards became known as the Boston Association of Congregational Ministers.² The pastors and teachers of the churches in the Bay Colony belonged to this fraternity, which met once a fortnight at the houses of the members. Mr. Skelton and Mr. Williams, both of Salem, took exception to it, "as fearing it might grow to a presbytery or superintendency, to the prejudice of the church's liber-

¹ Crescentius Mather, the father of Cotton Mather, married *Maria*, the sole surviving daughter of Rev. John Cotton, "y^e 6 day of y^e 1 month, being y^e fifth day of y^e weeke, 166½." See Notes in the fly-leaves of a Bible presented to Maria Cotton by her father, the Rev. John Cotton, and now in the cabinet of the Mass. Hist. Soc. Library.

"There are numerous descendants of Cotton living among us; and on October 4, 1859, occurred in Plymouth the death of Mrs. Priscilla Cotton, at the age of ninety-nine years and four days. Born in Plymouth September 30, 1760, in the reign of George II., she married John Cotton, fourth in descent from old John. Up to 1740 there had been twenty-seven preachers of this stock in New England." — WILLIAM T. DAVIS in a *Letter to Hon. R. C. Winthrop, Mass. Hist. Soc. Proceed.*, Vol. XIII. 211.

² Emerson's History of First Church, 21.



ties." But their fears proved groundless, as no jurisdiction of the kind was ever asserted.

The prominent place in the community occupied by Cotton at once became apparent; and in the church of Boston the fruit of his labors was particularly noticeable after his call to office. "More were converted and added to that church than to all the other churches in the Bay. Divers profane and notorious evil persons came and confessed their sins, and were comfortable received into the bosom of the church. Yea, the Lord gave witness to the exercise of prophecy, so as thereby some were converted and others much edified. Also, the Lord pleased greatly to bless the practice of discipline, wherein he gave the pastor, Mr. Wilson, a singular gift, to the great benefit of the church."

"After much deliberation and serious advice, the Lord directed the teacher, Mr. Cotton, to make it clear by the Scripture that the minister's maintenance, as well as all other charges of the church, should be defrayed out of a stock or treasury, which was to be raised out of the weekly contribution; which, accordingly, was agreed upon. . . . Mr. Cotton had disbursed eighty pounds for his passage, and towards his house, which he would not have again; so there was about £60 raised towards the finishing of his house, and about £100" towards his maintenance and that of Mr. Wilson.

During the months of November and December the small-pox broke out among the Indians, sweep-



ing away great numbers of them. Their own people fled from the disorder; but the English, among others Mr. Maverick, not in full communion with the church, were very constant in their ministrations.

At one of the early Thursday lectures, of which Winthrop first makes mention, a question was raised as to whether it were the duty of women to veil themselves in public. After quite a grave controversy, in the course of which Mr. Cotton took the position "that where (by the custom of the place) they were not a sign of the women's subjection, they were not commanded by the apostle," in which he was opposed by Mr. Endecott, "the governour [Winthrop] interposed; and so it brake off."

Divers disputes arose this year between Roger Williams (then of Salem) and the authorities of the Bay Colony.

"27] The governour and assistants met at Boston," and, after consulting "some of the most judicious ministers," ordered his "convention" at the next court. He was charged with calling in question the validity of King James's grant, claiming that they had no title to the land in their occupancy, unless it was secured by buying off the natives. His answer was so penitent, and the assurance of his loyalty so satisfactory, that, upon his retraction and taking the oath of allegiance, it was agreed to release him. His present mood did not



long continue, however, for next year he is charged with reiterating some of his former opinions, and, in addition, calling the churches of England anti-Christian. In July, 1635, he again appears before the court. Meantime the church of Salem, in what seemed like contempt of the magistrates, had chosen him teacher. The church and their minister were allowed further time "to consider of these things," and then either to give satisfaction or submit to the decree of the court. At the General Court in October following, all the ministers in the Bay being summoned to attend, Mr. Williams was again convened. The charge this time was for having "broached and divulged divers new and dangerous opinions against the authority of the magistrates, as also writ letters of defamation both of the magistrates and churches here."

Mr. Hooker was deputed to "reduce him" from error, but to no purpose; and the court finally sentenced him to depart out of the jurisdiction within six weeks, "all the ministers save one approving." His own church then refused to sustain him by declining to renounce communion with the other churches in the Bay, as he had requested them to do. Further liberty was given him till spring, provided he did not "go about trying to draw others to his opinion;" but, it coming to the ears of the authorities that he continued to preach his new doctrines, it was decided to send him back to England by a ship then about to sail. "Where-



upon a warrant was sent to him to come to Boston to be shipped." But he offered some excuse for avoiding the summons; and when they sent Captain Underhill to apprehend him, it was found that he had left three days before for parts unknown.

Viewed from the standpoint of a Theocratic form of government, it may well be doubted whether our fathers could have pursued any different course in dealing with Williams without at least imperilling the safety of their enterprise. Any one who saw fit to deny the authority of the government, as he did, was of course a dangerous element in the community. While we may regret that any such proceeding as was resorted to in his case was thought to be necessary, we must not let our feelings control our judgment. There was room enough outside for such as wished to try the experiment of setting up a different form of government without running the risk of upsetting one already established. It may be said that this view presents but one side of the question, and leaves out of consideration the merits of the entire controversy. This may be true. But let us here simply content ourselves with the reflection that what seems like harsh treatment in his case was not so in reality, — at least not as regards any actual discomforts attending his removal. The whole country was then little better than a wilderness; and, so far as climate, soil, and surroundings were concerned, the new home which he soon found in



Rhode Island would certainly compare favorably with any of his former habitations.

A doubt now arose in the minds of some of the Charlestown people as to whether they had been in fact dismissed from Boston Church. Such an anxiety may seem to us a little singular, but at that time "the rules and discipline of the church were so rigidly observed that a person coming from a neighboring church, in which he was here well known to enjoy a fair character and a regular standing, could not be received without renewing the profession of his faith." Take, for example, the following:—

"April 20, 1634, John Coggshall, gentleman, being dismissed from the church of Roxbury to Boston, though he were well known and approved of the church, yet was not received but by confession of his faith."

"1634. May 14.]" At the General Court Cotton preached¹ the doctrine that a magistrate ought not to be turned out of office without just cause, and under no circumstances should he be arraigned as a public criminal, any more than a magistrate may turn a private man out of his freehold without just cause.

On another and a similar occasion Cotton preached from Hag. ii. 4, on the "nature or strength (as he termed it) of the magistracy, ministry, and people; viz., the strength of the magistracy to be their authority; of the people, their liberty; and of the

¹ Supposed to be the first general election sermon.

ministry, their purity; and showed how all of these had a negative voice, and that yet the ultimate resolution ought to be in the whole body of the people, . . . which gave great satisfaction to the company."

"October 5.]" An attempt was made to reduce the number of lectures. Accordingly the ministers, with the advice of the magistrates, and with the consent of the congregations, agreed to hold two, instead of four, as formerly, and have them in different towns, Mr. Cotton delivering one in Boston on Thursday. But, on December 11, the former practice was resumed, as the severe weather made it inconvenient for people to travel.

"November 27.]" Mr. Eliot, teacher of the church in Roxbury, having, lately found fault, so it was said, in one of his sermons, with the course which the ministers pursued in making terms of peace with the Pequods, Mr. Cotton, Mr. Hooker, and Mr. Welde were appointed to "deal" with him, in order to make him see his error and give satisfaction. The three ministers accordingly conferred with Mr. Eliot, and brought him to admit that he had been at fault, and he was led to clear himself in public on the next Lord's day.

"Dec. 11.]" This day, after lecture, Mr. Cotton exerted his influence successfully towards securing a new election for public officers who should divide up the town lands. The poorer classes had combined to elect a different set of men from those hitherto in office, in order to obtain a more liberal



distribution. The seven men who were afterwards chosen, in accordance with Mr. Cotton's suggestion, made a fair division, and without any needless sacrifice, taking good care to preserve a decent portion of the lands to be used *in common* by all the inhabitants.¹

"13.]" This day the Church held a fast on account of the "absence of their pastor and other brethren gone to England, and like to be detained there," and for the loss of four persons (one of them a member of Boston Church) who had been drowned in the harbor.

"19.]" At a council of ministers held at Boston, all being present except Mr. Ward of Ipswich, two questions were propounded: First, If a general governor is sent over from England, what shall we do? Second, Is it lawful to carry the cross on our ensigns? There was some difference of opinion as to the second point; but as to the first, they all agreed that they ought not to accept him, but, if unable to oppose him, to "avoid or protract."

"1635. Mo. 3. 6.]" At the General Court held at Newtown for the election of magistrates, Endicott of Salem "was left out, and called into question for defacing the cross in the ensign." The committee who were appointed to inquire into the matter, after some deliberation, reported against him, and

¹ By this means the Boston Common is said to have been preserved for the enjoyment of posterity. "The first positive enactment by which the Common became a fixed tract of land, substantially as we now have it, was in March, 1640." — *Memorial History of Boston*, Vol. I. 517.



"adjudged him worthy admonition, and to be disabled one year from bearing any public office, declining any heavier sentence, because they were persuaded he did it out of tenderness of conscience, and not of any evil intent."

This decision gave rise to so much difference of opinion that the ministers promised to take hold of the matter, and "to write into England to have the judgment of the most wise and godly there." Whether they received any reply or not is unknown; but, at a General Court held the same year, the military commissioners, who were ordered to "appoint colors" for the different companies and at Castle Island, "left out the cross in all of them."

"Mo. 8. 6.]" Mr. Wilson returned from England, with his wife and family. Thomas Shepard, Hugh Peter, and other ejected ministers, arrived the same day.

"November 1.]" Mr. Henry Vane, son and heir to Sir Henry Vane, a privy councillor, was admitted a member of the church.

"10ber, 10.]" Mr. Norton arrived at Plymouth.

"Mo. 12. 1.]" Cambridge Church is gathered, Mr. Cotton giving the right hand of fellowship.

"25.]" A general fast proclaimed by the churches. "The church of Boston renewed their covenant this day, and made a large explanation of that which they had first entered into, and acknowledged such failings as had fallen out."

"1636. April.]" The question came up about



this time as to how those persons should be treated who, while visiting England, joined in the Episcopal worship. Should they be excommunicated for so doing? The method of dealing with this question exhibits a dawning sense of liberality; for, notwithstanding their separation from the mother church, it was treated as a matter of opinion worthy at least of allowance.

“Mo. 3. 15.”] Mr. Peter preached at Boston, and, among other things, earnestly requested the church to allow Mr. Cotton to go through the Scriptures and “raise marginal notes” on the knotty passages; and, further, to secure employment for “people (especially women and children in the winter time), for he feared that idleness would be the ruin both of church and commonwealth.”

Towards the latter part of this year

“One Mrs. Hutchinson, a member of the church of Boston,¹ a woman of a ready wit and bold spirit, brought over with her two dangerous errors: 1. That the person of the Holy Ghost dwells in a justified person; 2. That no sanctification can help to evidence to us our justification. From these two grew many branches; as, (1) our union with the Holy Ghost, so as a Christian remains dead to every spiritual action, and hath no gifts or graces, other than such as are in hypocrites, nor any other sanctification but the Holy Ghost himself.

“There joined with her in these opinions a brother of hers, one Mr. Wheelwright, a silenced minister sometimes in England.”

¹ She had been a member of Cotton's congregation in England, and arrived in this country Sept. 18, 1634, to enjoy his ministry.



Nothing better illustrates the sensitive spirit of the times regarding religious topics than the prolonged controversy which now ensued. The whole colony was stirred up by the discussion, till at last the contention became so alarming as to require the attention of the court. Such was the intimate relation between the Church and State in those early days that the slightest disturbance of one body was sure to react on the other. Mr. Cotton himself was thought by some to be too much in sympathy with the new doctrine; and several of Boston Church, encouraged by his seeming approval or sympathy of opinion, were for calling Mr. Wheelwright to be their teacher.

On the question coming up,

"One¹ of the church stood up and said he could not consent. His reason was because, the church being well furnished already with able ministers, whose spirits they knew, and whose labors God had blessed in much love and sweet peace, he thought it not fit (no necessity urging) to put the welfare of the church to the least hazard, as he feared they should do by calling in one whose spirit they knew not, and one who seemed to dissent in judgment, and instanced in two points which he delivered in a late exercise there: 1. That a believer was more than a creature. 2. That the person of the Holy Ghost and a believer were united. Hereupon the governour [Vane] spake,—that he marvelled at this, seeing Mr. Cotton had lately approved his doctrine. To this Mr. Cotton answered that he did not remember the first, and desired Mr. Wheelwright to

¹ Savage says, "Without doubt, Winthrop himself." Winthrop's Journal, Vol. I. 202, note.



explain his meaning. He denied not the points, but showed upon what occasion he delivered them. Whereupon, there being an endeavour to make a reconciliation, the first replied that, although Mr. Wheelwright and himself might likely agree about the point, and although he thought reverently of his godliness and abilities, so as he could be content to live under such a ministry, yet, seeing he was apt to raise doubtful disputations, he could not consent to choose him to that place. Whereupon the church gave way, that he might be called to a new church, to be gathered at Mount Woolaston."

It will be neither expedient nor profitable to consider the technical bearing of this controversy. It covers many pages of Winthrop's journal, and so intricate did the discussion become that the original point in controversy was soon lost sight of. All of First Church, except the pastor and three or four others, sided with Mr. Cotton, whose views, as has been stated, were somewhat in accord with those of Mrs. Hutchinson. Parties were formed at the next court on the basis of the new opinions. Mr. Cotton and his followers here found themselves in a minority, owing to the opposition of the country ministers and their churches.

"(11) 20.]" "A general fast was kept in all the churches. The occasion was the miserable estate of all the churches in Germany; the calamities upon our native country, the bishops making havoc in the churches, putting down the faithful ministers, and advancing popish ceremonies and doctrines; the plague raging exceedingly, and famine and sword threatening them; the dangers of those at Connecticut, and of ourselves also, by the Indians; and the dissensions in our churches.



"The differences in the said points of religion increased more and more; and the ministers of both sides (there being only Mr. Cotton of one party) did publicly declare their judgments in some of them, so as all men's mouths were full of them. And there being, 12 mo. 3, a ship ready to go for England, and many passengers in it, Mr. Cotton took occasion to speak to them about the differences, &c., and willed them to tell our countrymen that all the strife amongst us was about magnifying the grace of God; one party seeking to advance the grace of God within us, and the other to advance the grace of God towards us (meaning by the one justification, and by the other sanctification), and so bade them tell them that, if there were any among them that would strive for grace, they should come hither, and so declared some particulars. Mr. Wilson spake after him, and declared that he knew none of the elders or brethren of the churches, but did labor to advance the free grace of God in justification, so far as the word of God required; and spake also about the doctrine of sanctification, and the use and necessity, &c., of it; by occasion whereof no man could tell (except some few who knew the bottom of the matter) where any difference was; which speech, though it offended those of Mr. Cotton's party, yet it was very seasonable to clear the rest, who otherwise should have been reputed to have opposed free grace. Thus every occasion increased the contention, and caused great alienation of minds; and the members of Boston (frequenting the lectures of other ministers) did make much disturbance by publick questions and objections to their doctrines which did any way disagree from their opinions; and it began to be as common here to distinguish between men by being under a covenant of grace or a covenant of works, as in other countries between Protestants and Papists."

"(1) 9."] At the General Court, which now began, Mr. Wilson was sustained in his position.



The ministers were called upon at this session to give their opinion about the authority of the court in church matters. They all agreed that no member of the court ought to be publicly questioned by a church for any speech without the license of the court; and, secondly, "that in all such heresies or errours of any church members as are manifest and dangerous to the State, the court may proceed without tarrying for the church; but if the opinions be doubtful, they are first to refer them to the church. At this court, when Mr. Wheelwright was to be questioned for a sermon which seemed to tend to sedition, near all the church of Boston presented a petition to the court for two things: 1. That, as free-men, they might be present in cases of judicature. 2. That the court would declare if they might deal in cases of conscience before the church. This was taken as a groundless and presumptuous act, especially at this season, and was rejected, with this answer: That the court had never used to proceed judicially, but it was openly; but, for matter of consultation and preparation in causes, they might and would be private."

"One Stephen Greensmith," a person apparently of some consequence, "for saying that all the ministers, except A, B, C," (Cotton, Wheelwright, "and, as he thought, Mr. Hooker,") did teach a covenant of works, was censured to acknowledge his fault in every church, and fined £40.¹ Mr.

¹ James Penn and Edward Bendall, of Boston Church, were his sureties on a bond for that amount. Winthrop's Journal, Vol. I. 348.



Wheelwright caused further trouble at this time by a sermon preached in Braintree on a fast-day appointed to pacify the strife. He was sustained, as usual, by Governor Vane and the majority of Boston Church, and enjoined to appear at the next court.¹

"1637. Mo. 2. 6."] The following is perhaps worthy of note. When the church of Concord ordained their ministers, "the Governour, and Mr. Cotton, and Mr. Wheelwright, and the two ruling elders of Boston, and the rest of that church which were of any note, did none of them come to this meeting. The reason was conceived to be because they accounted these as legal preachers, and therefore would not give approbation to their ordination."²

The attention of the court at the next meeting was again drawn to the sermon of Mr. Wheelwright; but in order that "their moderation and desire of reconciliation might appear to all," and to give time for the churches to meet and confer, respite was allowed to the next session.

"Mo. 4. 15."] All the churches kept a day of thanksgiving "for the victory obtained against the Pequods and for other mercies."

"26."] Mr. Davenport arrived from England.

"Mo. 6. 5."] As a result of the religious excitement, a woman of Boston congregation became so

¹ Wheelwright labored principally at Braintree, then included within the wide range of Boston Church. See Pattee's History of Old Braintree and Quincy, 181.

² The same principle was adhered to when Wilson was chosen teacher in August, 1630, *ante*, Chap. I. 8.



worried about her spiritual condition that, in a fit of derangement, she threw her infant into a well, and then came into the house and said, "now she was sure she should be damned, for she had drowned her child." But, Winthrop adds, "some, stepping presently forth, saved the child."

About this time an attempt at a reconciliation took place between Cotton, Wheelwright, and Wilson. The 24th of the month was set down by the elders for a day of humiliation, and the 30th for a conference.

"17.] Mr. Davenport preached at Boston (it being the lecture day) out of that in 1 Cor.; I exhort you, brethren, that there be no divisions among you; wherein, as he fully set forth the nature and danger of divisions, and the disorders which were among us, so he clearly discovered his judgment against the new opinions and bitter practices which were sprung up here."

"Mo. 6. 30.]" The Cambridge Synod began. Representatives from all the churches were present. The meeting was attended with much warmth of discussion. "Some of Boston," becoming offended at a declaration of errors, "departed from the assembly." Mr. Cotton and Mr. Wheelwright, however, were given an opportunity to present their side of the question; and a better understanding, for a time at least, seems to have resulted from the arguments.

"Mo. 7.]" The last day of the assembly other questions were debated and resolved: 1. That, though women might meet (some few together) to pray and edify one another,



yet such a set assembly (as was then in practice at Boston), where sixty or more did meet every week, and one woman (in a prophetic way, by resolving questions of doctrine and expounding scripture) took upon her the whole exercise, was agreed to be disorderly, and without rule.

2. "Though a private member might ask a question publicly, after sermon, for information; yet this ought to be very wisely and sparingly done, and that with leave of the elders; but questions of reference (then in use) whereby the doctrines delivered were reprov'd, and the elders reproach'd, and that with bitterness, was utterly condemned.

3. "That a person refusing to come to the assembly, to abide the censure of the church, might be proceeded against though absent; yet it was held better that the magistrates' help were called for, to compel him to be present.

4. "That a member differing from the rest of the church in any opinion, which was not fundamental, ought not for that to forsake the ordinances there; and if such did desire dismission to any other church, which was of his opinion, and did it for that end, the church whereof he was ought to deny it for the same end."

"22.]" Adjourned *sine die*. A motion made by the Governor to consider about the maintenance of the ministers according to the rule of the gospel was dismissed, "lest it should be said, that this assembly was gathered for their private advantage."

"26.]" Mr. Davenport preached a sermon on "Unity."

"8. 12.]" A day of thanksgiving kept in all the churches for our victories against the Pequods, and for the success of the assembly; but, by reason of this latter, some of Boston would not be present at the publick exercises."



Effectual measures were now taken to root out the opinions which had caused so much alarm in the colony. For this purpose the authors of the mischief were first banished.

In spite of the sympathy felt for the views of Mrs. Hutchinson by most of the members of the old church, what was regarded as her inconsiderate behavior at last drove the court to take extreme measures to be rid of her. Mr. Wheelwright, still persisting in his "errours," was disfranchised and banished.¹

William Aspinwall and John Coggeshall, both deputies for Boston and sympathizers with Mr. Wheelwright, the former having drawn up and signed a remonstrance in his favor, also suffered the same penalty.

Of the others who signed this petition, some seventy in all, Captain Underhill and five or six more were disfranchised, and the rest disarmed.

Mrs. Hutchinson was first admonished, in hopes that that would convince her of error, and persuade her to make satisfaction; but, still persisting, she was finally cast out.²

¹ He was released from banishment in 1644, and before he died, in 1680, became the oldest minister in the colony.

² Church Records, 10.

The following is a copy of the order of court above referred to: "Whereas the opinions and revelations of Mr. Wheelwright and Mrs. Hutchinson have seduced and led into dangerous errors many of the people here in New England, insomuch as there is just cause of suspicion that they, as others in Germany in former times, may, upon some revelation, make some sudden irruption upon those that differ from them in judgment; for prevention whereof it is ordered that all those whose names are underwritten shall (upon



The following is the record:—

"The 22th of y^e jst Moneth, 1638. *Anne* the wife of o^r Brother Willyam *Hutchinson*, having on y^e 15th of this Moneth beene openly in Publique Congregation admonished of sundry Erro's held by her, was on y^e same 22th day Cast out of y^e Church for impenitently p.sisting in a manifest *hyc* then expressed by her in open Congregation."

She seemed to glory in her martyrdom; and it was not until a warrant was issued by the Governor requiring her to leave the jurisdiction before the end of the month that she finally departed. But it was a long time before the church ceased to be troubled by her and her sect. After leaving these parts, she first went to Rhode Island, but subsequently removed to the main-land opposite Long Island, where, five or six years later, with all her family but one son and one daughter,¹ she was murdered by the Indians, —forming a fearful climax to her eventful career.

During her stay in Rhode Island Mrs. Hutchinson gathered about her all the disaffected spirits in the community. Rhode Island was then a harbor-age for religious outcasts.

warning given or left at their dwelling-houses) before the thirtieth day of this month of November, deliver in at Mr. Cane's [Keayne's] house, at Boston, all such guns, pistols, swords, powder, shot, and match as they shall be owners of, or have in their custody, upon pain of ten pounds for every default to be made thereof." — *Court Records*, Vol. I. 207. A like penalty was enjoined, if any of those thus disarmed should purchase any arms or ammunition. Life of Mrs. Anne Hutchinson, by George E. Ellis, in *Sparks's American Biography*, Vol. VI. 298.

¹ The son remained behind in Boston; but the daughter was carried into captivity.



Here she attempted to establish a church of her own "in a disordered way," which became a thorn to the Boston congregation.

"Upon a fast, which was observed in Massachusetts Dec. 13, 1638, on account of prevailing sicknesses and heresies and the general declining of professors to the world, Mr. Cotton bewailed the state of things, and reviewed the whole controversy caused by Mrs. Hutchinson. He gave, doubtless, a perfectly true and candid statement of his part in it, and complained that his own name had been abused, and his opinions perverted, and himself made a cloak by seducers and heretics. Doctrines bearing only a resemblance to those which he had preached had been taught, and then ascribed to him, for the sake of entrapping others, but denied by their authors to himself, when he had expostulated with them. He acknowledged the justice of the sentence of banishment against the leaders in the mischief, without naming them; but he recommended that those whom they had misled should be dealt with by the church, or imprisoned, or fined, instead of being banished, as this extreme punishment would sever them from all religious privileges, and lead them into worse heresies. The teacher doubtless suggested, at the same time, some church proceedings in reference to those at the Island."¹ Strange mishaps to Mrs. Hutchinson, and one Mrs. Dyer, a devoted follower, afterwards hanged in Boston as a Quaker, form the subject of

¹ Life of Mrs. Hutchinson, in Sparks's American Biography, Vol. VI. 171.



a minute discussion by Winthrop. He regards the strange malformations with which they labored as a special visitation for the sins they had committed. But, in the former case at least, they can be satisfactorily explained as the natural result of the "fears and tossings to and fro," — an event of not infrequent occurrence in medical experience.

"The church in Boston concluded, upon sending a deputation of its members to the Island, to make one more attempt to reclaim Mrs. Hutchinson and her followers. Mr. Welde says that 'four men of a lovely and winning spirit' were sent on this errand; but by the record¹ it appears that only three went, namely, Captain Edward Gibbons, Mr. William Hibbins, and Mr. John Oliver. An account of their mission is extant in manuscript; and as our (church) histories contain no similar details of acts of church discipline, it is here given entire. The return was made in the meeting-house, after Mr. Cotton had finished his usual public exposition, March 16, 1640.²

"*Pastor.* Those three brethren that were sent by the church to those wandering sheep at the Island, being now returned, accordinge to the custom of the churches and servants of God in the Scripture, when they did returne, they gave an account to the church of God's dealinge with them, the passages of his providences, and how God car-

¹ Church Records, 12.

² The account of this mission was copied with great care and precision from Keayne's Journal by George E. Ellis, and appeared for the first time in print in his *Life of Anne Hutchinson*, before referred to. The original manuscript is preserved in the Mass. Hist. Soc. Library.

Captain Robert Keayne was a man of wealth and position. He was a brother-in-law of Wilson, and the founder and first commander of the Ancient and Honorable Artillery Company. He died 23:1:56, leaving the longest will (158 folio pages) to be found in the Suffolk Probate Registry. Soon after his admonition, as before referred to (*ante*, 19), he was reconciled to the church, and restored to full communion.



ried them alonge; it is expected of the church that some one of you, or all of you one after another, should declare the same, that the church may have matter to praise God with you.

“Brother Hibbins. We think it our duty to give an account to the church of God’s dealinge with us in our journey out and in, and of the success of our business when we came to our journey’s end, at the Island. The second day of the weeke we reached the first night to Mount Wollistone, where we were refreshed at our brother Savage’s house, whereby we were comfortably fitted for our journey the next day, in which, by the good mercy of God and the help of your prayers, God did accompany us with seasonable weather.

“And in our journey the first observable providence of God that presented itself to our view, and especially to my own observation, which was in providing for me a comfortable lodging that second night, which was the thing I most feared, because I never was used to lie without a bed. There was one that met us in the way that came from Cohannet [Taunton], who had a house to himself, and he, of his own accord, did give us leave to lodge and abide in his house that night, where, myself especially, and all of us, had comfortable lodging for that night, which was a great refreshing to us, and a deliverance from my fear.

“The next providence of God that fell out in our journey was some manifestations of God’s hand against us; for being the fourth day, to pass over a river [Taunton River] in a canoe, in which was eight of us, our canoe did hang upon a tree, to our very great danger, the water running swiftly away. Now, my ignorance was such that I feared no danger, though those who had more skill saw we were in imminent danger. Here our God delivered us.

“But now, we coming safe over the water, it pleased God to exercise us much in the loss of our brother Oliver, whose company we missed and did not perceivē it, he fall-



ing into Mr. Luttall's company, that was agoing the way to the Island; then they lost their way. And as our hearts were full of fear and care for our brother, so was his for us. The fear was increased on both sides because there fell a great snow, and very hard weather upon it, and it was to our great rejoicing when we met one another again in health and safety, according to the good hand of our God, that was upon us in our journey, and that they had been exposed to much danger in that cold season for want of a fire, and all means to make it, had not the Lord, beyond expectation, provided for them to bring forth a little powder through the shot of the piece. Now the fifth day we were to go over another river, where we were in great danger, our canoe falling upon a rock, which, had not some of our brethren, more skilful, stepped out off the rock and put off the canoe, our danger had been very great. But God brought us safe at last, on the sixth day, viz. the 28th day of the 12th month, to our great rejoicing.

“*Brother Oliver.* Now for the success of our journey to our brethren at the Island. We acquainted them with our purpose in coming, and desired that they would procure us a meeting that day; but, for reasons in their own breast, and because of the snow, they did not think meet then to give us a meeting. But the next day they promised and did give us a meeting, — Mr. Aspinwall, our Brother Baulston, Brother Sanfoard, and others, — and we delivered our message and the church's letter, which they read and gave us satisfactory answers. The next day we went to Portsmouth [North Town], where, being entertained at our brother Cogshall's house, we desired them to procure us a meeting to deliver our message and the church's letter. But when we expected a meeting Mr. Cogshall sent us word that, by reason of a civil meeting, that was before appointed. But, for a meeting, they did not know what power one church hath over another church, and they denied our commission, and refused to let our letter be



read. And they conceive one church hath not power over the members of another church, and do not think they are tied to us by our covenant. And so were we fain to take all their answers by going to their several houses. Mr. Hutchinson told us he was more nearly tied to his wife than to the church; he thought her to be a dear saint and servant of God. We came then to Mrs. Hutchinson, and told her that we had a message to do to her from the Lord, and from our church. She answered, 'There are lords many and gods many, but I acknowledge but one Lord. Which Lord do you mean?' We answered, 'We came in the name of but one Lord, and that is God.' 'Then,' saith she, 'so far we agree; and when we do agree let it be set down.' Then we told her, 'We had a message to her from the church of Christ in Boston.' She replied, 'She knew no church but one.' We told her, 'In Scripture the Holy Ghost calls them churches.' She said, 'Christ had but one spouse.' We told her, 'He had in some sort as many spouses as saints.' But for our church, she would not acknowledge it any church of Christ.

"*Mr. Cotton.* Time being far spent, it will not be seasonable to speak much. We bless God with our brethren for their protection in their journey, asunder and together. We find they have faithfully and wisely discharged the trust and care put upon them."

The teacher then proceeds to consider the "answers of our brethren at the Island." He arrives at the conclusion that it is better to bear a little longer with all, except the excommunicate. But as for them "that will not hear the church, let them be to you as a heathen and a publican."

The same journal also contains the following information about Francis Hutchinson, who had been admonished by Boston Church July 20, 1640, be-



cause he declined to vote for the admonition of his mother:—

“Francis Hutchinson, living at the Island, or Portsmouth, with his father and mother, so that he cannot frequent the church, nor the church discharge her duty in watching over him; desired, by a letter to the church, that we would dismiss him, to God and to the word of his grace, seeing he knew of no church there to be dismissed to.

“It was answered by our teacher, and consented to by the church, that there was no rule in Scripture for such a dismissal. We may recommend him to God, and may dismiss him to the word of his grace, when there is any such word there to dismiss him to, but not till then, seeing the covenant of the church is an everlasting covenant; and no church hath power, when God hath added any member to the church and tied him, to release him, but to another church. And though we cannot perform all our duties to him so far off, yet some we may.”

The pastor then proceeded to draw analogies from the custom of the church of Jerusalem, requiring allegiance of those who dwelt at Rome and Ethiopia, and other remote places.¹

About this time a young minister named Collins espoused the new cause. In a letter to some one at Boston he is said to have “charged all our churches and ministers to be anti-Christian, and many other reproachful speeches, terming our king ‘King of Babylon,’ and sought to possess the people’s hearts with evil thoughts of our government and of our churches.”

¹ “The formal reply of Mr. Cotton in the name of Boston Church (Hutchinson Papers, Mass. Hist. Coll., 2d series, Vol. X. 184) agrees with this report.”—GEO. E. ELLIS.



"Collins and Francis Hutchinson made a visit to Boston in the summer of 1641, and were immediately and forcibly brought before the Governor and council and elders, the former to answer for his letter," and the latter for reviling the church in Boston. "They were imprisoned until Collins should pay a fine of one hundred pounds, and his companion a fine of fifty pounds." Winthrop says: —

"We assessed the fines the higher, partly that by occasion thereof they might be the longer kept in from doing harm (for they were kept close prisoners), and also because that family had put the country to so much charge in the Synod and other occasions, to the value of £500 at least; but after, because the winter drew on and the prison was inconvenient, we abated them to £40 and £20. But they seemed not willing to pay anything. They refused to come to the church assemblies, except they were led, and so they came duly. At last we took their own bonds for their fine, and so dismissed them."

They were forbidden, on their release, to return to the jurisdiction, under pain of death. Nevertheless they found some sympathy in the church; and even the constable who had the charge of them was fined for his favor to them.

"1638. Mo. 6. 25."] The court called upon the ministers to rebuke the prevailing extravagance in dress and following new fashions; but small success attended their efforts, as some of the ministers' wives were to a certain extent responsible for the practice.



"Sber.]" About two years before, Mr. Bernard, an English minister, of Batcomb, in Somersetshire, had sent over two manuscripts, one to the magistrates and another to the elders, which were directed against their way of forming churches. The elders had been so busy, by reason of the troubles growing out of the dealings with Mrs. Hutchinson, as not to find time to reply to them. Mr. Cotton now performed that service, and also answered another book in support of common prayer.

A person of very different character and morals from those of Mrs. Hutchinson, but at the same time a disturber of church order and discipline, was one Captain Underhill. A good soldier, and of great service against the Indians, he was frequently called to account for his loose behavior and improper speeches. As an instance of the latter, on his return from England he was heard to say "that we were zealous here, as the Scribes and Pharisees were, and as Paul was before his conversion." He attempted to deny this; but, on being confronted with a good witness, this and something more was proved against him. He told how "he had lain under a spirit of bondage and a legal way five years, and could get no assurance, till at length, as he was taking a pipe of tobacco, the Spirit set home an absolute promise of free grace, with such assurance and joy as he never since doubted of his good estate, neither should he, though he should fall into sin." For this and other offences he was banished.



"On the Lord's day following he made a speech in the assembly, showing that, as the Lord was pleased to convert Paul as he was in persecuting, so he might manifest himself to him as he was taking the moderate use of the creature called tobacco. He professed, withal, that he knew not wherein he had deserved the sentence of the court, and that he was sure that Christ was his. The elders reproved him for this speech; and Mr. Cotton told him that, . . . although God doth often lay a man under a spirit of bondage when he is walking in sin, as Paul was, yet he never sends such a spirit of comfort but in an ordinance, as he did to the same Paul by Ananias; and ergo advised him well to examine the revelation and joy which he had."

"1638 (10). 6.] Dorothy Talbye was hanged at Boston for murdering her own daughter, a child of three years old. She had been a member of the church of Salem, and of good esteem for godliness; but falling at difference with her husband, through melancholy or spiritual delusions, she sometimes attempted to kill him and her children and herself, by refusing meat, saying that it was so revealed to her. After dealing with her, the church finally cast her out. She then behaved better for a short time; but finally, 'she was so possessed with Satan that he persuaded her (by his delusions, which she listened to as revelations from God) to break the neck of her own child, that she might free it from future misery.' She did not confess the indictment 'till the governor told her she should be pressed to death.' 'Mr. Wilson went with her to the place of execution, but could do no good with her.'"¹

"13.] The devil would never cease to disturb our peace, and to raise up instruments one after another. Amongst the rest, there was a woman in Salem, one Oliver his wife, who

¹ There is a curious resemblance between the state of mind apparent in this poor creature and that of one Freeman, of Pocasset, who was indicted in the year 1879 at Plymouth, Mass., for killing his child, as he said, under a divine revelation. Freeman was committed to an asylum as insane.



had suffered somewhat in England for refusing to bow at the name of Jesus, though otherwise she was conformable to all their orders. She was (for ability of speech and appearance of zeal and devotion) far before Mrs. Hutchinson, and so the fitter instrument to have done hurt, but that she was poor and had little acquaintance." She kept her tongue a-wagging till finally "she had a cleft stick put on it half an hour for reproaching the elders."

"(11) 30.]" The devil seemed to be active also at Weymouth, where Mr. Lenthall, late of England, and an imbibor of Mrs. Hutchinson's opinions, had settled. Mr. Cotton was appointed to treat with him and convince him of his errors. He finally retracted; but some of his followers, notably one Britton, were fined or whipped.¹

"1639 (3.) 2.] Mr. Cotton, preaching out of the 8 of Kings, 8, taught that, when magistrates are forced to provide for the maintenance of ministers, then the churches are in a declining condition. Then he showed that the ministers' maintenance should be by voluntary contribution, not by lands, or revenues, or tithes; for these have always been accompanied with pride, contention, and sloth."

The church censure of Mr. Keayne has already been alluded to. The following false principles and rules for trading were deduced from his case. Some of the former were:—

"1. That a man might sell as dear as he can, and buy as cheap as he can.

¹ "Lechford says of Britton that 'he was whipped eleven stripes;' and his guilt is by that author represented as 'saying that some of the ministers in the Bay were Brownists.'" — WINTHROP'S *Journal*, Vol. I. 289, note.



"2. If a man lose by casualty of sea in some of his commodities, he may raise the price of the rest.

"3. That he may sell as he bought, though he paid too dear, and though the commodity be fallen.

"4. That, as a man may take the advantage of his own skill or ability, so he may of another's ignorance or necessity.

"5. Where one gives time for payment, he is to take like recompense of one as of another."

Rules for trading:—

"1. A man may not sell above the current price, i. e. such a price as is usual in the time and place, and as another (who knows the worth of the commodity) would give for it if he had occasion to use it; as that is called current money which every man will take.

"2. When a man loseth in his commodity for want of skill, he must look at it as his own fault or cross, and therefore must not lay it upon another.

"3. Where a man loseth by casualty of sea, or, &c., it is a loss cast upon himself by providence, and he may not ease himself of it by casting it upon another; for so a man should seem to provide against all providences, that he should never lose; but where there is a scarcity of the commodity, there men may raise their price; for now it is a hand of God upon the commodity, and not the person.

"4. A man may not ask any more for his commodity than his selling price, as Ephron to Abraham, the land is worth thus much."

Some of the church wanted to excommunicate Keayne, but, as the record shows, he was let off with a simple admonition.¹

In the year 1640 the congregation set about build-

¹ *Ante*, Chap. I. 20.



ing a new meeting-house, the old one being dilapidated and too small. Winthrop says they sold away the old one, and agreed to build another, which workmen undertook to set up for £600.¹ "Three hundred they had for the old,² and the rest was to be gathered by voluntary contributions, as other charges were." There was some contention about selecting a site, the tradespeople preferring the proximity of the market-place, while others advocated the green (which was the Governor's first lot, situated on the corner of what are now Milk and Washington Streets, being a part of the Old South Society estate). The tradesmen prevailed, and the church was finally erected on Cornhill Square, where the Old Brick that succeeded it used to stand.³

In the previous year Winthrop speaks of the church as in a particularly thriving condition. To show some sense of their obligation to him for this result, but more particularly on account of a misfortune which befell the Governor through the un-

¹ The actual cost was £1,000. See Winthrop, 24, which Savage cites as authority for the statement that the edifice was finished in 1640, and not in 1639, as most writers have indicated.

² The large sum realized by the sale of the old church cannot be wholly attributed to the value of the land on which it stood. The building itself must have been sufficiently substantial to be worth preserving. Partly on this account, and partly from a consideration of the wealth of the founders, it is reasonable to suppose that some solid material entered into the composition of the first meeting-house, and not, as has been generally supposed, simply clay and mud. — Ed.

³ Where Joy's Building, which is now being reconstructed, lately stood. The first sermon in the new (second) meeting-house was preached Aug. 23, 1640. Memorial History of Boston, Vol. I. 537, note.

faithfulness of his steward in England, the church made him a present this year of £200.

Captain Underhill was cast out of the church for gross misconduct on the "5th day of y^e 1st moneth" (1640), so says the church record. But the same year we find that he made humble confession, and was given another trial.

At the Court of Assistants held in 1640 Hugh Bewett was banished for promulgating views about original sin not in accord with those of the authorities.

On a training-day in Boston in 1641, twelve hundred men appeared in line; but, Winthrop says, such was their sobriety, that not one was drunk or swore an oath.

"1642 Mo. 1: 27."] Mr. William Aspinwall, who had been banished for joining with Wheelwright, having liberty to retract his errors, "was this day reconciled to the church of Boston." Afterwards, on making a full acknowledgment of the same before the magistrates appointed to take his submission, upon their certificate he was released from banishment.

In the year 1642 Captain Underhill contrived to restore himself into favor with the church sufficiently to induce them to fit him out with a pinnace, to take him and his family to some place where he could find better employment. He desired to go to the Dutch country; but "the church, understanding that the English at Stamford, near the Dutch, had

offered him employment and maintenance, advised him rather to go thither, seeing they were our countrymen and in a church estate. He accepted this advice; but when he came there he changed his mind, or at least his course, and went to the Dutch.”¹

Several fasts were kept this year, for one cause and another. Such observances are characteristic of the times, and of too frequent occurrence to bear further insertion in this history.

“5 28.”] A surreptitious edition of Cotton’s sermons on the “Seven Vials” makes its appearance. Mr. Humfrey had them printed in London from notes taken here, without authority from Cotton, or any revision by him, and received three hundred copies for his pains.

“6.”] Letters came from members of both houses of Parliament, and three ministers in England “who stood for the independency of churches,” to Cotton, Hooker (of Hartford), and Davenport (of New Haven), inviting them to attend a synod called to settle the question of church government.

Cotton and Davenport were rather inclined to go; but Hooker decidedly opposed the plan.

Soon after more letters from England, with news of the breach between king and Parliament, and with advice from Mr. Welde and Mr. Peter to tarry awhile, put an end to all hesitation.

¹ Savage gives an interesting sketch of this remarkable man in a note to Winthrop’s Journal, Vol. II. 15.

A call from Virginia to supply them with ministers of the gospel, read at the Thursday lecture, met with but a feeble response, only one, Mr. Tompson of Braintree, complying with the invitation.¹

A spirit of restlessness about this time broke out in Boston, arising partly from a general depression in trade, and great numbers of people embarked for foreign countries; some even returned to England. This declension calls forth from Winthrop a lament, followed by a beautiful expression of fortitude, and devotion to his adopted country, at one of the most critical periods in her history. "Ask again," he says, "what liberty thou hast towards others which thou likest not to allow others towards thyself; for if one may go, another may, and so the greater part; and so church and commonwealth may be left destitute in a wilderness, exposed to misery and reproach, and all for thy ease and pleasure, whereas these all, being now thy brethren, as near to thee as the Israelites were to Moses, it were much safer for thee, after his example, to choose rather to suffer affliction with thy brethren than to enlarge thy ease and pleasure by furthering the occasion of their ruin."

"1643 1. 5.] The churches held a different course in raising the minister's maintenance. Some did it by way of taxation, which was very offensive to some."

¹ Two other ministers afterwards joined him.



"One Briscoe," for writing a book against taxation, "was fined ten pounds, and one of the publishers 40 shillings."¹

In the year 1643 La Tour, the French governor (as he claimed), from St. John's, arrived at Boston, to exhibit his commission as lieutenant-general of Acadia. He attended our church meetings, though a papist, or "idolater." This called forth discussion from the elders, whether such a thing as communion with idolaters were lawful. The arguments on both sides show a strange mixture of religion and expediency. Mr. Cotton and some of the elders had a conference with one of the "friars" of the company, and the former found him a "very learned, acute man."

"5. 22.]" Severity seemed to "have a good effect on Hett his wife," for, "being cast out of the church of Boston, the Lord was pleased so to honour his own ordinance, that whereas before no means could prevail with her, either to reclaim her from her wicked and blasphemous courses and speeches, or to bring her to frequent the means, within a few weeks after her casting out, she came to see her sin and lay it to heart, and to frequent the means, and so was brought to such manifestation of repentance and a sound mind, as the church received her in again."

¹ The right to levy taxes for the support of the ministry which prevailed in country parishes until quite a recent date was never exercised in the town of Boston. "The ministers of the several churches in the town of Boston have ever been supported by a free weekly contribution." It was even doubted by "one minister" whether it were lawful to receive support in any other way.



Mo. 7. 4.] "There was an assembly at Cambridge of all the elders in the country (about fifty); such of the ruling elders as would were present also, but none else. They sat in the college, and had their diet there after the manner of scholars' commons, but somewhat better, yet so ordered as it came not to above sixpence the meal for a person. Mr. Cotton and Mr. Hooker were chosen moderators. The principal occasion was because some of the elders went about to set up some things according to the presbytery, as of Newbury. The assembly concluded against some parts of the presbyterial way, and the Newbury ministers took time to consider the arguments."

The proceeding against Gorton and his companions of Providence is but another instance of the stern spirit of the magistrates. Their notions were those of uneducated, illiterate men, but at the same time of a sort to cause contentions and draw followers. To pass them by in silence would be a departure from the practice in all similar cases, and might endanger "the peace of the churches."

As for the sentence, "all the magistrates, save three, were of opinion that Gorton ought to die; but the greatest number of the deputies dissenting, that vote did not pass. In the end all agreed upon this sentence, for seven of them, viz. that they should be dispersed into seven several towns, and there kept to work for their living, and wear irons upon one leg, and not to depart the limits of the town, nor by word or writing maintain any of their blasphemous or wicked errors upon pain of death, only with exception of speech with any of the elders, or any other



licensed by any magistrate to confer with them; this censure to continue during the pleasure of the court." Cotton and all the elders combated this spirit of Gortonism; and, the advice of the latter being called for, their answer was that, if the charge was maintained, *they deserved death by the law of God.*¹

On May 14, 1645, the General Court assembled in the meeting-house, when Winthrop delivered a vindication of his conduct from a charge of arbitrariness, and in what he calls his "little speech" on that occasion, gave that admirable definition of liberty so highly praised, especially by Tocqueville.

It was the custom in those days here, just as it was until quite recently in parts of England, to hold political and public gatherings in the meeting-house,² as the most available and convenient place for assembling.

This speech was the last great effort of the noble Winthrop. The church was destined soon to lose its great supporter and founder. Before he died, true to his devout nature, Winthrop sent for the elders to pray with him. At the same time the church fasted and prayed, and Cotton preached a sermon appropriate to the occasion. He died on March 26, 1649, at the age of sixty-one years, two

¹ Dr. Charles Deane gives a concise and impartial statement of the proceeding against Gorton in the *New Eng. Hist. and Geneal. Reg.* (1850), 201.

² The General Court was held in First Church meeting-house as late as 1658. Sometimes they held elections in the open air, notably on one occasion, — in May, 1636, — when Wilson, the minister, became so displeased at the way in which the business was conducted that he climbed a tree, and spoke with such effect as to turn the scales. Hutchinson, Vol. I. 61, note.



months, and fourteen days, and on the 3d of April "his body was buried with great solemnity and honor."

In the year 1646, some of Hingham, becoming a little wearied by the restraint imposed upon them, whereby many who were members of the Church of England were debarred from free worship, contrary to the rights of free-born subjects of England, drew up a petition setting forth their grievances, and asking that the distinction, or rather the combination, between civil and church estate might be removed. This was punished, as a rebellion against the order of churches, with fine and imprisonment. They appealed to Parliament; and two of them, Dr. Child and Mr. Fowle, a merchant, sailed for England to prosecute the business. The result was awaited with considerable anxiety on this side of the water; but the minds of the rulers were soon set at rest, for Parliament had other and weightier matters on hand which called for more immediate action.

At this time marriages were ratified by the magistrates, a preliminary step being the "Contraction a little before the Consummation," at which a pastor was usually employed; and a sermon preached.¹

¹ After Samuel Danforth's "*Contraction*, according to the Old Vusage of *New-England*, unto the Virtuous Daughter of [the Reverend] Mr. Wilson [of Boston] (whereat Mr. Cotton preached the Sermon), he was married" 5 November, 1651. Mather's *Magnalia*, Vol. IV. 155. Dexter's *Congregationalism*, etc., 458, note.

A careful search through the old record book of First Church reveals no entries of marriages. Charles Morton (1686-98) was the first and only minister of the First Church in Charlestown to record marriages in that book.



"1647:4:(6).] There was a great marriage to be solemnized at Boston. The bridegroom being of Hingham, Mr. Hubbard's church, he was procured to preach, and came to Boston to that end. But the magistrates, hearing of it, sent to him to forbear. The reasons were, 1, for that his spirit had been discovered to be averse to our ecclesiastical and civil government, and he was a bold man, and would speak his mind, 2, we were not willing to bring in the English custom of ministers performing the solemnity of marriage, which sermons at such times might induce, but if any ministers were present, and would bestow a word of exhortation, etc., it was permitted."

The synod at Cambridge, called in 1646, came to an end in 1648. The following vote shows a tendency in these early times to discourage legal proceedings:—

"The 22th Day of y^e 12th Moneth, 1649. Att a Church Meeting agreed upon by y^e Church to be on this Day for y^e needfull occasions thereof, It was agreed upon by y^e Church yⁿ mett together y^t none of y^e members cyther of o^r owne church or Reco^mended or Dismissed to y^e church from any other Should goe to law one wth another wthout the consent of o^r brethren y^e Maio^r Gibbon, M^r Dun-

Before his time ministers were not authorized to solemnize them. When Dr. Frothingham opened a new record book on Jan. 1, 1841, he took occasion to say in the preface, that, of three books handed to him in 1815, but one contained a record of marriages, and that began in the year 1800. He says: "I have never been able to discover any preceding list of the same kind, or even to ascertain whether any were preserved in the archives of the church, though such a document has been often inquired for."



kan, M^r Stoddar, James Penne & Thomas Marshall, but they shall answer for it unto the Church as an offence against it." ¹

"The 28. Day of y^e 1. m^o. 1650. Our Brother *James Penn* was chosen by y^e Church wth a vnanimus Consent to be a Messenger to goe and Distribut the Churches Contributions (to y^e poore Church of Christ y^t was banished from *Bermudos* for the Gospells sake to Segoton). And he was sent out to sea on y^e 13 of y^e 3^d m^o. And on y^e 17th day of the 4th m^o. 1650, we arived at Segotea, where I found the people in wants, who when I had Given the Churches letters and Declared the end of *my* coming they thanked god and y^e churches, and after on months stay wth them we retorned backe and arived at Boston the 17th of the 6th m^o. 1650, and soe declared to y^e church y^e good hand of God vpon vs in o^r voyage, w^{ch} was matter of praise to God." ²

In the year 1650 the Second Church in Boston was gathered. Nearly twenty years had elapsed since the First Church was formed; and now the growing population felt the need of another place of worship. "The foundation of the Second Church edifice in Boston was laid, in 1649, at the head of North Square. The first sermon in it of which we have information was at the gathering of the church on the fifth day of June, 1650." Several distinguished preachers of the day—such men as Samuel Mather, John Norton, and John Davenport—were invited to take charge of the new church; but none could be persuaded until four years had elapsed, when John Mayo, of Nosset, in

¹ Church Records, 20.

² Ibid. 26.



Plymouth County, Mass., accepted a call, and was duly ordained on Nov. 9, 1655, to be followed, in the year 1664, by a more distinguished preacher (Rev. Increase Mather), whose fruitful ministry covered a period of sixty-two years. It is told, to the credit of Cotton, that he did all he could to further the undertaking, "notwithstanding it might draw away parishioners from himself." Like John the Baptist, "he reckoned *his* joy fulfilled in this, that in his own *decrease* the interests of his Master would *increase*."¹ In 1651, the year before Cotton died, First Church contributed a fourth part of the whole contribution (£800) taken up in the colony for a struggling church at Bermuda, a large part of the two hundred pounds coming from Cotton and one other. Emerson gives the following data:² —

"In 1650 there were about forty churches in New England, and seven thousand seven hundred and fifty communicants. One thousand and thirty-four children had been baptized since Mr. Cotton's ordination. Of these 538 were males, and 456 females. There had also been admitted, during this period,—that is, from the beginning of 1634 to the end of 1652,—306 men and 343 women; in all 649. Seventeen persons had been admonished publicly, and five excommunicated for irreclaimable errors."

¹ Robbins's History of Second Church, 6 et seq.

² Emerson's History of First Church, 81, 82.



CHAPTER III.

1653-1670.

JOHN WILSON, JOHN NORTON, JOHN DAVENPORT,
JAMES ALLEN.

Prominent Position of the Early Ministers. — Death of Dudley. — John Norton. — Right of Baptism. — Life of Wilson. — John Davenport. — Controversy over his Settlement in First Church. — Formation of Third Church from Disaffected Members of the First. — James Allen.

THE death of Cotton left Wilson in sole charge of the church for a period of nearly four years, until the installation of John Norton. The latter performed the duties of minister during a portion of this time, although not regularly installed as teacher until July 23, 1656. The paucity of important events, compared with the interest attaching to individuals, especially noticeable during this early period, makes it somewhat difficult to observe the bounds separating history from biography. The lives of the first four ministers, extending to the close of the present chapter, contribute largely to the narrative of church occurrences. We have seen how Cotton absorbed all the interest in church matters while he lived; and the same is true, perhaps in



a less degree, of the other three. The minister still dictated to his flock. As churches became more numerous this power was gradually weakened, till at last in 1684 the final blow was struck by the vacating of the colony charter and the adoption of the new, or provincial charter, making the franchise depend, not upon church membership or certificate from the minister, but upon a simple property qualification.¹ This change essentially diminished the temporal power of the ministers.

Governor Dudley died July 31, 1653. He was born at Northampton (Eng.) in 1574.² He was a man of undoubted ability and character, but extremely sensitive to opposition and tenacious in opinion. This disposition on his part no doubt served to keep alive a variance between him and Governor Winthrop. The Governor, so he said, had given him to understand in 1632 that Newtown was to be the seat of government; and under this impression he had planted himself at that place.³ In this he was disappointed; Boston became the capital; and the result was to him a pecuniary loss, besides the disappointment involved. The ministers, as referees, decided that the Governor should

¹ Bradford's History of Massachusetts, 93. The order of the General Court allowing a certificate from the minister to be substituted for that of church membership was enacted Aug. 3, 1664. Mass. Coll. Records, Vol. IV, Part II. 118.

² The true year of his birth is said to be 1576. Mass. Hist. Soc. Proceed. (1868-70), 207.

³ Winthrop went so far as to prepare a frame for his house, but afterwards removed to Boston, and on this account Dudley took offence.



either procure them a minister at Cambridge and help support him, or should pay Dudley £20 towards building another house. The latter course was chosen; but Dudley declined the gratuity, and the whole affair was happily ended.¹

"In the year 1655, according to the historians of that day, Mrs. Anne Hibbins [wife of a leading man in Boston] was tried and condemned for a witch, and executed in the following year. There is, however, no notice of this fact in First Church records."²

"On 29 Nov., 1655, a church meeting was holden at the house of the pastor, in which it was voted to give Mr. Norton £200 towards the purchase of a house, on the supposition that he becomes the teacher of the church."

Cotton is said to have proposed him for a successor on his death-bed.

Norton was much esteemed by the people of Ips-

¹ Their children afterwards intermarried, and this event helped to heal the breach

² Emerson's History of First Church, 88. Upham gives the order of court condemning her to be executed under the date of May 14, 1650. History of Witchcraft, 421. Mr. Norton did what he could to save her in spite of the popular clamor, as appears from the following story told by a clergyman in Jamaica in a letter written to Increase Mather in 1684: "You may remember what I have sometimes told you your famous Mr. Norton once said at his own table, — before Mr. Wilson, the pastor, Elder Penn, and myself and wife, &c., who had the honor to be his guests, — that one of your magistrates' wives, as I remember, was hanged for a witch only for having more wit than her neighbors. It was his very expression; she having, as he explained it, unhappily guessed that two of her persecutors, whom she saw talking in the street, were talking of her; which, proving true, cost her her life, notwithstanding all he could do to the contrary, as he himself told us." — *Ibid.* 423.



wich, who did all they could to keep him; but finally, "after the lapse of nearly four years, the sitting of several ecclesiastical councils and the decision of the Governour and magistrates in favour of his removal, he and his wife were admitted members of First Church 6 July, 1656."

LIFE OF NORTON.

John Norton, son of William and Alice (Browest) Norton, was born at Stortford in Hertfordshire, May 6, 1606. His parents, who were respectable persons, sent him to a school kept by a Mr. Strange, of Bunningford. He early showed a great deal of intellectual vigor, and entered Peterhouse, Cambridge, at fourteen. After taking his first degree in 1623, his father having lost property, he was obliged to leave college, and accept positions as curate and usher at Stortford. While at Cambridge he attracted attention for ability and scholarship. A Catholic priest, seeing that he was a promising youth, tried to make him change his creed, but without success. In early life Norton showed none of that austerity of spirit so manifest in maturer years. He was naturally rather inclined to gayety, though not to excess; but gradually, and chiefly under the preaching of Rev. Jeremiah Dyke, rector of Epping, a deep sense of sin entered in and took possession of his soul. He showed fine abilities as a preacher, and had an offer from his uncle of a



valuable benefice ; but the requirements which the position involved proved a bar to its acceptance. On the same account he was obliged to decline an offer of a fellowship at Catharine Hall, Cambridge, from the master, Dr. Sibbes. Unlike a large part of the English clergy at that time, Norton was decidedly opposed to Arminianism. Cut off from any higher range of duty, he finally contented himself with the post of chaplain to Sir William Marsham. Here he resided for some time, not without hope that larger tasks might be in store for him.

But finally, seeing no prospect of a change for the better, he resolved to migrate to the New World. In 1627 he received the degree of M. A. Before embarking in September, 1634, Norton married a lady "both of good estate and good esteem." He then went to Yarmouth and joined Thomas Shepard, revered as the minister of Cambridge Church, and largely instrumental in the foundation of Harvard College. After a long delay they set sail in the *Great Hope*, four hundred tons burden, but in a few hours were driven back by a violent storm, which disabled the vessel, and put off their departure until the following year. During the interval Norton resided in Essex with Mr. Dyke and other friends. Meantime Governor Winslow, agent for Plymouth Colony, had invited him to assist Ralph Smith as teaching elder over Plymouth Church. Norton and Winslow came over together. When



the former left England, an old minister said that he believed that there was not more grace and holiness left in all Essex than what Mr. Norton had carried with him. On reaching the New England coast in October, 1635, they were met by another storm, which was wellnigh fatal; but finally, after ten or twelve days, the ship was safely anchored in Plymouth harbor.

Norton stayed but a short time in the Pilgrim colony, although they offered him every inducement to settle among them, — Mr. Smith, their pastor, even resigning in his favor, — and early in 1636 removed to Boston. His argumentative powers were here put to a good and satisfactory test in a public debate with a French priest. He finally accepted a call to settle as teacher of Ipswich Church, Feb. 20, 1638, with the Rev. Nathaniel Rogers as pastor. Before his acceptance of this office he had preached in the same place as assistant to Mr. Ward. In 1637, before his settlement at Ipswich, he attended the synod called to deal with Mrs. Hutchinson, and performed valuable services. When he went to live in Ipswich several families, who came over with him from England especially to enjoy his ministry, at his request, obtained grants of land from the town authorities. On Nov. 5, 1639, the General Court allowed Norton two hundred acres of land. Dec. 22, 1645, is the date of his reply to questions on ecclesiastical government propounded by the Rev. William Apollonius of Middleberg, in Holland, un-



der the direction of the ministers in New Zealand. The questions were intended for the Congregational ministers in London; but for some reason were sent over to this country, and by request of the ministers here, Mr. Norton undertook to answer them. This task was gracefully performed "in the first Latin book ever written in this country." There is a preface to the work by "Tho. Goodwin, Phil. Nye, Sidr. Simpson, dated Lond., Feb. 16, 1647;" and a long epistle to the author, by "Johannes Cotton, in Ecclesia Bostoniensi Presbyter docens."

While he was engaged in writing this book complaints were made that his sermons were not up to their former standard; and Mr. Samuel Whiting, of Lynn, was appointed to confer with him on the subject. He accordingly gave Norton a kindly word of caution, which was received without a murmur, and turned to good account. In 1660 he again showed his skill in Latin composition by a letter, signed by himself and forty-three other ministers, addressed to a "visionary Scotchman named John Dury." In 1645 and 1661 he preached the Election Sermon. He took an active part in the synod of 1646, and during the session delivered a lecture in Boston which caused the church to renounce their scruples about sending messengers to the council. In 1646 Winthrop and Norton were chosen by the colony to be agents in affairs with the mother country. But the danger of imprisonment was thought to be so great that they were not allowed to pursue the



errand. In 1650 he was appointed to write a reply to William Pynchon, by order of the court.¹

His removal to Boston, on the death of Cotton, stirred up a decided opposition on the part of Ipswich Church. They were willing that Mr. Norton should return to England, as he had previously asked permission to do, in case nothing occurred to change his mind; but they were not disposed to allow him to go to Boston to settle. One member of his old church suggested that the matter be left for Mr. Norton's decision alone, but the latter declined the responsibility; and it was finally agreed, as a compromise, that he should be allowed to go to Boston, but not in view of a permanent settlement. On May 18, 1653, the General Court congratulated Norton on the acceptance of his call from Boston Church, and ordered a letter of thanks to Ipswich Church for their magnanimous consent to his dismissal.

But Norton had not been in Boston more than two years, when the death of Rogers was the occasion for a renewal of dissatisfaction on the part of his former church. After long and serious debate, and the advice of several councils in favor of a dismissal from his former connection, Norton himself, becoming a little tired of the controversy, threatened to settle the question by carrying out his former plan of a return to England. To prevent this from taking place, the Governor and magistrates summoned

¹ N. E. Hist. and General. Reg. (1859), 293.



a council of twelve churches. This body finally disposed of the matter, and the long and bitter strife was ended. In 1658 he published a life of Cotton; and in 1659, "The Heart of New England Rent," etc.

Mr. Norton exercised large influence in the new position which he was called to fill. His advice was of great service, both in civil and religious concerns. In 1653 he helped to keep the peace with the Dutch at Manhados; and in 1656 was sent with Elder James Penn to Salisbury to settle a religious controversy,—an errand of frequent occurrence at that time. In the following year he went to Hartford on business of a like nature.

In 1662 he was sent with Simon Bradstreet, as colonial agent, on an important mission to England. This agency, which had in view an address to Charles II. on his restoration in 1660, was accepted by both with great reluctance, and delayed for some time by the illness of Mr. Norton. They finally sailed on Feb. 11, 1662, and did what was possible with an affair so delicate; but on their return were received with frowns and charges of unfaithfulness on the part of those who had hoped for larger concessions from the king than a ratification of their charter. The issue of this mission was fraught with so much annoyance and loss of esteem to Mr. Norton that it is said to have shortened his life.¹

¹ Cotton Mather is authority for this statement, but see Felt's History of Ipswich, 224.



On Sunday, April 5, 1663, he had conducted the morning service, and fully intended to preach in the afternoon, but meantime was seized with a sudden fit of apoplexy, and died the same day. The name of his first wife is not recorded. He married his second wife, Mary Mason, of Boston, on the day of his installation in the First Church. He left no children. But one brother, William, of Ipswich, and another, Thomas, who lived with his mother and three sisters in London, all survived him.

Norton was regarded as second in ability only to Cotton. He was rigid in doctrine and discipline, and favored the extremest measures against the Quakers. His sermon on "The Heart of New England Rent at the Blasphemies of the Present Generation" shows how bitterly he felt towards that turbulent sect.

For this service he was rewarded by the court with a grant of land.¹ On the other hand, the Quakers reviled him while living, and at his death are reported to have said, "that the Lord had smitten John Norton, chief priest of Boston, as he was sinking down by the fireside; being under just judgment, he confessed the hand of the Lord was upon him, and so he died."²

¹ Records of Massachusetts, Vol. IV. Part I. 397. In 1659 the General Court grant each town copies of Mr. Norton's work, in the press, against the Quakers, in proportion to its rates. Felt's History of Ipswich, 61.

² Hutchinson, Vol. I. 233, note. Memorial History of Boston, Vol. I. 184. Notice of his sudden death from Roxbury Church records is given in the N. E. Hist. and General. Reg. (1880), 89; and from *ibid.*, July (1859), an early pedigree, owned by Professor C. E. Norton of Cambridge.



For those people who had no cause to dread his anathemas his preaching seems to have had great attractions. One of his former church at Ipswich would frequently walk to Boston, then a distance of thirty miles, to hear him preach at Thursday lecture, observing, "that it was worth a great journey to be a partaker in one of Mr. Norton's prayers."

By his will, dated Jan. 14, 1661, he left £10 to the poor of the church in Boston.

The church record gives the following enumeration for the period from 1653 to 1656 inclusive: "Two hundred and ten children baptized, one hundred and twenty-three of whom were males; twenty-four persons admitted to communion, seventeen of whom were women; three men and as many women had been dismissed, at their own desire, to other churches; one male admonished for keeping evil company; three males excommunicated for the sins of drunkenness and adultery; and one male acknowledging the sin of drunkenness, for which he had been suspended, restored to the bosom of the church."¹

In January, 1657, the following question was decided in the affirmative, namely: "Whether the relation of immediate children of church members be such as giveth the church a church power over them; and, consequently, whether it is the duty of the church to exercise that power regularly upon them, that their life and knowledge may be answerable to the engagement of their relation; and whether it be the

¹ Emerson's History of First Church, 89.



church's mind, that solemn notice be given to them seasonably."

As a result of the vote, the church used to admonish and even excommunicate children of church members. In the same year, at a synod of twenty-six ministers, it was agreed that children of church members should be baptized. And again, in 1662, another synod was held at Boston to consider in part the same matter; and it was decided that "church members who were admitted in minority, understanding the doctrine of faith, and publicly professing their assent thereunto, not scandalous in life, and solemnly owning the covenant before the church, wherein they give up themselves and children to the Lord, and subject themselves to the government of Christ in his church, their children are to be baptized."¹ It was further decided that "it was expedient to have a consociation of churches."

The statistics from 1657 to 1663 give seventy-one new members, forty-nine of whom were females, — together with one hundred and fifty-four female and forty-nine male baptisms.²

By the death of Norton, Wilson was again left

¹ The reason for adopting this measure was because some of the second generation of settlers had not become avowed church members, so that their children, constituting, of course, the third generation, would be debarred from baptism, unless some change was made, or the requirements were modified. For a discussion of the "Half Way Covenant," and the opposition which it called forth from Davenport and Chauncy, see Dexter's *Congregationalism*, etc., 469 et seq.

² Emerson's *History of First Church*, 99.



without a colleague.¹ He was now seventy-six years of age, and could hardly expect to bear the burden long. From 1664 to 1667 inclusive,² the church received large accessions, both by admissions and baptisms, and at the date of Wilson's death was particularly flourishing. On Aug. 7, 1667, the church lost their venerable and beloved pastor, who had been with them, as the record says, since "the first beginning of the plantation." To the account of his ancestors, which has already been given, it should be added, that his grand-uncle, Sir Thomas Wilson, was secretary of state to Queen Elizabeth, and his father-in-law, Sir John Mansfield, "a relative of Dr. John Dod, the Decalogist," was her Majesty's surveyor and master of the Minories.

LIFE OF WILSON.

At ten years of age Wilson was sent to school at Eton. He soon showed superior scholarship; and when the Duke of Biron, French ambassador, visited the school, was chosen to deliver a Latin oration. After four years at Eton, he was admitted to Kings College, Cambridge, in 1602, and there re-

¹ A letter, dated Oct. 20, 1663, and signed by the Governor in the name of the General Court, was sent to Dr. John Owen, desiring him to come over and accept the call of First Church to become teacher in place of Norton; but he declined. Hutchinson, Vol. I. 226.

² During this period "eighty-three persons, forty-nine of whom were females, adjoined themselves to the church. In the same space of time two hundred and twenty-four children were baptized, one hundred and fourteen of whom were females."—EMERSON'S *History of First Church*, 101.



ceived a fellowship. His early views were opposed to Puritanism; but on becoming intimate with Dr. William Ames and Richard Rogers of Wethersfield, and comparing their writings and teachings with those of "Greenham, Dod, and Dent, especially Dent's Pathway to Heaven, he saw that they who were nicknamed Puritans were likely to be the desirable companions for one that intended his own everlasting happiness." And finally objecting to the ceremonious observances required by the Established Church, he was threatened with expulsion by the bishop of the diocese. His father did all he could to suppress these rebellious tendencies, but his remonstrance availed only to strengthen them into convictions. By the paternal advice the young man then went to one of the inns of court to study law; but after devoting three years to this pursuit, the desire to preach still held mastery, and he finally took orders in the Church of England. On account of his refusal to subscribe, he experienced some trouble about obtaining a degree of M. A.; but finally, through the intercession of the Earl of Northampton, chancellor of the university, the title was conferred.

He continued a while at Emmanuel, and then left to resume the ministry.

The first half of his life was spent in England, preaching the last ten or twelve years in various places,—at Mortlake, Henley, Bumsted, Stoke, Clare, Candish, and Sudbury,—besides serving as



chaplain in various noble families, among others, that of Lady Scudamore. Early in life he had formed a resolution, "that if the Lord would grant him liberty of conscience, with purity of worship, he would be content, — yea, thankful, though it were at the furthest end of the world." This resolve was at length tested, as the record shows, in 1630, when the storm of persecution drove him to seek refuge in this country.

His ministry in First Church covered thirty-seven years. Wilson was more remarkable for his strength of faith and love than for his talents as a preacher, though the last were of no mean order. He resembled Norton and others in his zeal for ordinances, but at the same time showed himself to be a most devoted friend and helper to those who needed his love and care.

The story of his climbing a tree at an election in Cambridge, to make a speech in behalf of Winthrop, shows that his heart would warm to friendly offices, even on secular occasions. His hospitality and benevolence were proverbial. Wilson was very fond of anagrams, which caused the witty author of the "Simple Cobbler of Agawam" to say that his should be, "I pray you come in; you are heartily welcome."

He aided the apostle Eliot in his labors among the Indians, and was employed as chaplain in the Pequot war.¹ For the latter service the court al-

¹ On account of the side which he took in the Hutchinsonian controversy, the soldiers declined to serve in his company.



Woods of the Rev. John Wilson
From a sketch by Miss F. S. Quincy taken in 1846.



lotted him a thousand acres of land in the present town of Quincy, Mass.¹

In 1638 he preached the first Artillery Election Sermon.²

In the death of Wilson the church lost a connecting link with the past. He was the last of the four original signers of that solemn church covenant

¹ The General Court, on April 1, 1634, granted to the Rev. John Wilson two hundred acres of land at the North River "nexte Meadford on the north." On December 10, of the same year, this land was ordered to be exchanged for the same quantity "at Mount Wooleston at his election," Mr. Wilson to "pass over to the towne of Boston" the two hundred acre farm at Medford. The land "at Mount Wooleston" to be as near his other land there "as may be for his most conveniency."—*N. E. Hist. and Gen. Reg.* (1867), 33.

The Wilson estate of one thousand acres lay in parts of Milton and of Quincy, and probably included the site occupied subsequently by the residence of John Adams. See Pattee's History of Old Braintree and Quincy, 22, for a notice of Wilson's house; *Ibid.* 11, 21, 23, 24, 33, 55, as to the grant in general. — *Letter from Hon. Josiah Quincy*, March 25, 1881.

The grant to John Wilson appears to have bounded on the southwesterly part of the grant of upwards of one thousand acres to William Coddington and Edmund Quincy by the town of Boston in 1635, and probably comprised the Wollaston heights of the present day. A few years since a house of one story was standing close to a brook which falls into the bay north of Mount Wollaston, and about half a mile from Edmund Quincy's. It would have been on the way from E. Quincy's to Penny Ferry, about where the so-called granite bridge passes over the Neponset River. This house was probably Mr. Wilson's, the son or grandson of the Rev. John Wilson. The house of E. Quincy is yet standing, and the cellar of Mr. Coddington's has but recently disappeared. — *Letter from Miss E. S. Quincy*, March 25, 1881.

"In the inventory of Rev. John Wilson, — 'Richard Bracket & Edmund Quinsey, Braintry, 19th Augt, 1667, appraise the farm wherein Mr. Thomas Faxon doe now dwell, appertaining to the estate of the Reverend Mr. John Wilson lately deceased, containing one dwelling house and barne, with about seaven hundred acres of land, more or less of swamp, meadow, arable or woodland, &c., as also tenn cowes & a mare at 1300 pounds.' " — *Letter from Mr. Thos. Munns*, April 26, 1881.

² From that year down to the time of the removal from Chauncy Street to the present location in 1868, a period of two hundred and thirty years, the Artillery Election Sermon was preached, with scarcely a break, in First Church meeting-house.

entered into before Boston was settled. Naturally then, as life began to fail him, his people gathered around to learn lessons of faith, love, and wisdom from the lips of the dying prophet. To them he said, "that he should soon go to be with his departed friends in heaven. Yet," he added, "I have been an unprofitable servant. The Lord be merciful to me a sinner!"¹

For more than a year after the death of Wilson no one was called to supply the vacant place. John Davenport, of New Haven, a man of great report, but advanced in years, and James Allen, a victim of the Bartholomew Act, which deprived him of his living in England, were both "called to be teaching officers" Sept. 24, 1667, but were not set in office until Dec. 9, 1668.

LIFE OF DAVENPORT.

John Davenport was born in Coventry in Warwickshire. In the list of baptisms in Holy Trinity Church for the year 1597 it is entered, "Apr. 9, John Dampard [colloquial for Davenport], [fifth] son of Henrie [by Winifred Barnabet, his wife]."²

At an early age Davenport was sent to the Free Grammar School of Coventry, then about fifty years old, and of established reputation. The original

¹ During the year 1668 "six men and four women were admitted to the church, and three male and two female children baptized." — EMERSON'S *History of First Church*, 109.

² The stone font then in use is still preserved. Life of Davenport by F. B. Dexter in *New Haven Hist. Soc. Papers*, Vol. II. 206.



building was still standing in 1877, "and used for the purpose of the endowment."¹

The usher at the earlier period, but afterwards head master, was Dr. Holland, the well-known translator of classical works. In 1611 Coventry was greatly excited over a letter from King James, severely rebuking the city authorities for not enforcing the ceremony of kneeling at the sacrament. Davenport, then a boy of fourteen, was thus early made familiar with the ruling of his spiritual master on a subject which, at a later period, brought about his separation from the Church of England. He went to Oxford in 1613, — Wood says to Merton College,² — at the age of sixteen. It is doubtful, however, to what college he belonged. The President of St. John's College at that time was William Laud, better known in history by a different title, but just as well to men like Davenport without any prefix at all. According to Wood, John Davenport and his kinsman, Christopher, entered college as "battlers" ("or beneficiaries for their food and tuition"), until, deprived of this aid, the former was left to work his way.

Forced to find some means of support, at the age of eighteen he became a preacher. The sermons which he wrote the first winter after his removal from Oxford — spent, as the headings show, at Hilton Castle, near the city of Durham — are

¹ Life of Davenport by F. B. Dexter in New Haven Hist. Soc. Papers, Vol. II 266.

² *Athenæ Oxonienses*, Vol. III. Col. 889

still preserved in the library of Yale College.¹ In March, 1616, he removed to London, and preached for a year or two, without any apparent "living," until June, 1619, when, as the records of St. Lawrence Jewry show, he was chosen by the vestry lecturer and curate, under Rev. William Boswell, vicar. He stayed there for five years, acquiring reputation as a preacher, and intimacy with several noble and eminent supporters of the rising Puritan party. He was next promoted to the office of vicar. On Oct. 5, 1624, the adjoining parish of St. Stephens, Coleman Street, — in the exercise of a peculiar privilege, which then as now gives them the right to choose their own minister, — extended an almost unanimous call to Davenport. Of seventy-three parishioners present, all but three or four voted for him.

The appointment did not give satisfaction to the party in power, on account of his suspected Puritan proclivities. Documents preserved in England and in this country show the drift of their opinion, as well as the anxiety of Davenport at this period to meet the charges brought against him. Ten years after his removal from Oxford he returned to take the degree of B. D., of which straitened circumstances had thus far deprived him. The date of this application was May 18, 1625. On his return to London, the same year, in the season of a great plague, when thousands died in that place alone, he devoted himself to the visitation of the sick.

¹ Dexter's Life of Davenport, 208.



For this service the parish of St. Stephens, in 1626, voted "that Mr. Davenport shall have of the parish funds, as a gratuity, the sum of £20."

About the same time he engaged in a correspondence with Dr. Alexander Leighton, father of the Archbishop, on the subject of kneeling at the sacrament, in which he strongly urges the exercise of moderation in preference to hasty action; and further cautions the fiery Scotchman not to mistake a shadow for substance, but rather "to unite o' forces against those who oppose us in Fundamentalls, than to be divided amongst o'selves about Ceremonialls."¹

In March, 1627, he was one of four "evangelical ministers in London" who signed an appeal for aid in behalf of abused Protestants, "subjects of the Queen of Bohemia, sister of Charles I."

As the objects of this charity were not in favor with the king and Council, of which Laud was now a member, the result of the movement in their behalf produced a censure from the Star Chamber. In 1628 he wrote a series of nine letters to Lady Mary Vere, a strong Puritan, "who had charge of the three children of the king who were in the Parliament's control." In one of the first two letters, dated June 30, he mentions some "High Commis-

¹ Dexter's *Life of Davenport*, 215. "The true Coppye of a Dispute betwixt Dr. Leighton, Dr. of Physicke, sometimes a preacher, and John Davenport, Bachelor of Divinity, and pastor of St. Stephen's in Coleman Streete, about kneeling at the Sacrament," is in the possession of Mr. W. A. Saunders of Cambridge.



sion troubles," and fears that "former quarrels" with Bishop Laud may "deprive him of his pastoral charge." The High Commission troubles grew out of an attempt to establish what Dr. Bacon calls "a sort of Home Missionary Society." This body was informally gathered in London by several preachers and laymen of advanced views, who were anxious to engage men of their own pattern to preach at large. They bought all the church livings and rights of presentation which they could secure, and in places where these were not to be had, established lecture-ships. The prime motive, of course, was to advance the growth of Puritanism; and their chief opponent was not long in finding it out and summoning them before the court. The case finally went against them, and the association was dissolved in February, 1633.

In 1629 Davenport furthered the undertaking for the colonization of Massachusetts, under Endicott, with a liberal subscription of £50. His name does not appear in the list of patentees, for the reason, according to Mather, "that he feared its insertion might provoke the opposition of Laud in the Privy Council." But he was first on the list of a committee to draw up instructions for Endicott.

His first printed sermon, so far as known, entitled "A Royal Edict for Military Exercises, published in a Sermon preached to the Captains and Gentlemen that exercise Armes in the Artillery Garden at their general Meeting, June 23," appears



in 1629. The text was divided after the fashion of the time, as follows: "Also | he bade them | teach | the children of Judah | the use of the bow. | Behold it is written in the book of Jasher."¹

In the same year he was joint editor with Dr. Sibbes of the Sermons of Dr. John Preston, who, at the time of his death the year before, was regarded as the leader of the Puritans.

The State Paper office contains his reply, in 1631, "to certain objections devised against him by Timothy Hood, sometime his curate." Hood, it seems, was dismissed for good cause, but took offence, and complained of Davenport for various alleged acts of non-conformity. The latter wrote a specific denial of the whole charge, at the same time admitting that there were occasions when, through no fault of his own, but simply on account of the great number of his parishioners, it became impossible for all of them to come to the chancel, or kneel to receive the sacrament; "but," he concludes, "where they can kneel as well as sit he hath advised it, and in case of refusal hath refused to administer."²

An indication of the caution which he found it necessary to observe at this period appears by an entry on the parish records, where special attention is called to the fact that "a weak and sickly parishioner" is licensed "to eat flesh during the present Lent."

¹ Dexter's Life of Davenport, 218.

² Ibid., 219.



His labors at the same time were very arduous, as appears by another entry on the record, where it is "agreed [in April, 1633] that Mr. Davenport shall have out of the parish stock £20 towards his charge in going and coming from the Bathe."

The year 1633 is supposed to be the time of his inward change from a conformist to a non-conformist. In the latter part of the same year the death of Archbishop Abbot, and the probable choice of Laud for his successor, brought about the resignation of Davenport. "He left London on Monday, August 5th," and after three months' delay, in order to avoid arrest, fled in disguise to Holland, "in pursuance of an invitation from his countrymen residing there."

On his arrival at Haarlem, early in November, two of the elders of the English Church in Amsterdam met and escorted him to that place, where it was proposed to make him assistant to their minister, the Rev. John Paget, a man advanced in years. Davenport still yearned for a return to England and his former parish; but early in December all hope was taken away by the choice of a new man to fill the vacancy.

Soon after his arrival at Amsterdam he wrote a letter to his old friend, Lady Vere, which contains an account of his sufferings for the "alteration of his judgment in matters of conformity to the ceremonies established."

"He now begins preaching (twice each Sunday at

first),” but soon found serious difficulty with their custom of promiscuous baptism. Out of this grew a controversy with Paget, which was finally referred to the “Dutch Classis of City Ministers,” who appointed a committee of five prominent theologians to arbitrate the matter. They reported in January in favor of some indulgence in the observance of the ordinance. Davenport objected, but without effect; and finally, after less than six months’ service, gave up public preaching. One Stephen Goffe, chaplain of an English regiment at the Hague, and brother of the regicide whose life afterwards depended in such large measure upon Davenport, worked secretly to bring about this result. He was a man of slender scruples, who, in order to advance his own interests, laid a scheme for the removal of Davenport. For this purpose he sends over the news of his arrival to a friend in London to be forwarded to Laud, together with some letters still preserved, which sufficiently attest the malice of the writer. In one of these letters Goffe refers to an interview with Paget and Gerard Vossius, a distinguished professor at Amsterdam. He worked to deceive the latter, especially giving hints as to the best course to pursue in order to prejudice his mind against Davenport. In a subsequent letter he states that his efforts have proved successful, and that Davenport is known as a deserter and for his sermons against the civil government of England. In conclusion, he prays that “we shall be delivered



from this plague, and he will make for New England." His victim was accordingly summoned before the English agent at the Hague to answer the charge of preaching against the government.

His reply, dated March 18, 1634, is preserved in the British Museum. After giving up public preaching in April, the rest of the year was devoted to private meetings held at his lodgings on Sundays, at different hours from the regular services. To these gatherings many of his countrymen resorted. In the same year an unauthorized publication of his views on promiscuous baptism passed upon by the Dutch Classis, together with a set of rules for the guidance of his followers in religion, and his statement of their grievances, is made by one of those who attended these services. It caused some stir, and a reply from Paget. It also produced a "Protestation" from Davenport in 1635, and an "Apologeticall Reply" to Paget in 1636. His letter to Lady Vere, written in 1635, refers to the matter as one which has caused him great annoyance. About this time he appears to have visited the Hague and Rotterdam. He returned to England late in 1636 or early in 1637, and probably visited Lady Vere at Hackney. Laud's vicar-general reported, March 6, at Braintree, that "Mr. Davenport had lately been in these parts, and at Hackney not long since. I am told that he goeth in gray, like a country gentleman." But he avoided arrest, and sailed for New England, "probably about the middle of April."



The proclamation, "at the end of April," passed to prevent unauthorized emigration, seems to have been in close connection with his flight.

The band of colonists, headed by Theophilus Eaton, arrived at Boston on June 26, and there lingered for nine months. During this visit Davenport attended an ecclesiastical council, and served as a member of the committee appointed to carry out the vote establishing the college. In March, 1638, it was agreed to settle at Quinnipiac. About a fortnight before the colonists sailed from Boston a farewell letter, written by Davenport, was addressed to the Bay Colony by the two leaders in the enterprise. They reached New Haven in April.

Davenport was then forty-one years old, and destined to fill a large place in the new colony. During the first year of the settlement he wrote two books,—one on civil, and the other on ecclesiastical government, as established in the new plantation,—both of which displayed great argumentative powers.

On June 4, 1639, after a sermon by Davenport, the Articles of Government for New Haven Colony, as drawn up by him, were formally ratified. On August 22 the church was established under his direction, as also the "Profession of Faith," which, two years later, was printed in London. The views set forth in this catechism do not differ materially, if at all, from those of the Church of England, except in regard to organization and government.



Soon after this he wrote a letter to Lady Vere, giving an encouraging account of the progress of the colony, and laying stress on the possession of "the greatest outward privilege under the sun," which allows them "to have and enjoy all God's ordinances purely dispensed in a church gathered and constituted according to his owne minde."

In October following, at the first election of officers, he gave a solemn charge to Governor Eaton, based on the law of Moses. In 1649 Charles Chauncey, of Scituate, wrote to him for instructions on the point of immersion in baptisms. His reply opposed the practice. In 1652 he produced a "vindication of Jesus as the Jewish Messiah," and in 1653 began a series of letters to Governor Winthrop of New London. On June 4, 1660, Davenport transferred to the General Court the trust property given by Edward Hopkins for the formation of a college at New Haven, and accompanied the act with an explanation of the donor's intent, and his own wishes. As the origin of the Grammar School in that place, but more particularly as a harbinger of a larger organization forty years later, this ceremony is deeply significant.

In the same year Davenport wrote, in the name of the colony, a reply in Latin to a letter from John Dury, "who was laboring to promote the union of the Calvinistic and Lutheran churches."

During the struggle which finally resulted in the



consolidation of New Haven and Connecticut Colonies, his pen was active in opposition.

The story of his coming to Boston, and the controversy which thence ensued, will be told hereafter.¹

Davenport was particularly rigid in his notions of church discipline. He maintained that the order of worship should be based on the Hebrew institutes and the usages of the primitive Christians. His views on the subject of baptism were of the same stern description. In weighing his ability and character, as that of nearly all the ministers of the day, Cotton not excepted, allowance must be made for the zealous reforming spirit so apt to possess the devotee. The story of his conduct on the occasion of the flight of King Charles's judges to New Haven shows that he possessed a resolved heart, at all events. On the Restoration in England, in 1660, three of the judges who signed the warrant for the execution of Charles I. fled to New England. On their arrival they were well entertained at various places, — among others at New Haven, — and for some time thought themselves out of danger. But the news of the king's proclamation for their arrest arriving, they were obliged to abscond. They appeared at New Milford in the daytime, but at night returned secretly to New Haven, and hid in Mr. Davenport's house until April 30, 1661. "About the time the pursuers came to New Haven, and

¹ "1663, 2^d day, 3^d month, at 3 or 4 in afternoon came Mr. John Davenport to town." — JOHN HULL'S *Diary*. Previous to his invitation from First Church he had received a call from the Second Church. *Ante*, Chap. II.



perhaps a little before, and to prepare the minds of the people for their reception," Davenport preached a series of sermons. The text of one of them was from Isaiah xvi. 3, 4: "Take counsel, execute judgment; make thy shadow as the night in the midst of the noon-day; hide the outcasts; bewray not him that wandereth. Let mine outcasts dwell with thee, Moab; be thou a covert to them from the face of the spoiler." At the close of his account of him Emerson says: "As a scholar Mr. Davenport was always placed in the first rank. His judgment was profound, and his excursive fancy was guided by a correct taste."

thus you have my opinion, w^{ch} I pray, consider
in love, and accept as y^e ingenuous expression of
a plain heart desirous to be rectified, in case of
error, or to benefit others, if the truth guide me.
Now, if you please, lett vs proceed to Arguments, where
in I expect, as I found in this, y^t you give y^e first
Onset. when we have compared rem adu x^e
and rationem cum ratione, I hope, y^e truth
will breake forth as y^e lighte, w^{ch} in humi-
lity, and simplicity I wish, beseeching you y^t
nothing be done thorough contention or vain
glory; but lett vs write y^e truth in y^e
love of tr. Thus, expecting yo^r answer, I cease
John Davenport

In 1669 he preached the Election Sermon.

Davenport died March 15, 1670, at the age of





seventy-two. He was minister at New Haven nearly thirty, and of First Church not quite two years. He was the last of that group of four Johns so famous in the history of the church and colony. His body was interred in the Cotton tomb in the Chapel Burying Ground.

The settlement of Davenport involved First Church in a serious controversy. Before he was chosen to office the majority of that church, under the influence of Wilson, favored the new order of baptism, established by the synod of 1662, commonly called the "Half Way Covenant." On the death of Wilson, and the choice of Davenport for his successor, the majority experienced a reaction. The change in sentiment was doubtless owing to the leadership of Davenport, whom Cotton Mather calls "the greatest of the anti-synodists." The minority in the church, to the number of twenty-eight, who were opposed to Davenport "on the ground of the rigidity of his sentiments" and his advanced age, finally withdrew in a body, and with one member from the church in Charlestown formed a new church.¹ The Third Church in Boston was, like the old church, formed in Charlestown at two meetings, held May 12 and 16, 1669, under the sanction of a council of churches, which assumed the granting of a regular dismissal denied to them by the old church. First Church took no part in the ceremonies either

¹ The land for the Third (or South) Meeting-house was given by Madam Norton, widow of Rev. John Norton of First Church.



of formation or election of officers, and refused to dismiss the wives of some of the dissenting brethren who wished to join their husbands in the new covenant. Church contentions in those days seldom proceeded far without the intervention of the General Court; and this case proved to be no exception. At the May session, 1670, that body decided in favor of First Church, in opposition to the organization of the new, or Third Church. The following is a part of the report of a committee appointed to examine into "those prevailing evils which were the probable cause of God's displeasure towards our land":—

"Declension from the primitive foundation work; innovation in doctrine and worship, opinion and practice; an invasion of the rights, liberties, and privilege of churches; a usurpation of a lordly, prelatical power over God's heritage; a subversion of gospel order; and all this with a dangerous tendency to the utter devastation of these churches; turning the pleasant gardens of Christ into a wilderness; and the inevitable and total extirpation of the principles and pillars of the congregational way: these are the leaven, the corrupting gangrene, the infecting, spreading plague, the provoking image of jealousy set up before the Lord, the accursed thing, which hath provoked divine wrath, and doth further threaten destruction."

Some of the ministers objected to this report so strenuously that, the popular sentiment in the meantime having completely changed, it brought forth an apology the following year. "The court decreed that all papers relating to the late difficulty should be



accounted useless, and that no odium ought to rest upon those ministers who had been instrumental in establishing the Third Church. In doing this, however, care was taken to secure the authority of the magistrates; and due caution was administered against questioning the rectitude of legislative proceedings." From letters preserved in the records it appears that the church at Dedham was at variance with First Church over the removal of Davenport. As might have been expected, the church did not thrive during all this controversy.¹ It received very few accessions, and was busied principally with admonitions and excommunications.

"On 12 Feb., 1669, Edward Ransford and Jacob Eliot were dismissed from the office of deacons for setting their hands, with other brethren, to desire their dismissal from the church, because the church had chosen Mr. Davenport for their pastor."

"On 29 March, 1670, at a meeting called about our dissenting brethren, the question, whether the church see light from the word of God to dismiss our dissenting brethren that desire it, was answered in the negative, unanimously."

"At a general meeting of the church on 16 August, 1669, it was voted by the church, that our honored magistrates do draw up instructions for Capt. Clarke to N. Haven, that they might declare the owning of the letter sent from them to this church to be a true dismissal for M^r Davenport."²

¹ "In 1669 two men only and six women were received as members. Twenty male and nineteen female infants, in that year, were baptized." — *EMERSON'S History*, 117.

² It was one of the objections against settling Mr. Davenport, that he had not been properly dismissed from his former church at New Haven, as would appear by letters, parts of which, it was claimed, had been suppressed.

"At a meeting of y^e church: on y^e 20: of August: 69, It was voted by y^e church y^t maj^r gen^l, y^e elders, w^h Capt. Clark, M^r Stoddard, and M^r Cooke, do draw up a letter in answer to y^e letter sent from Dedham Church, enquiring after the proceeding of y^e church about a letter or letters from y^e church of N. Haven to this church, and to sign it in the name of the church."

"On 25 Aug., 1669, the church met to hear the letter read that was sent to Dedham; and they did unanimously concur with it, as their own mind."

"At a church meeting on 9 Oct., 1669, 'upon hearing the letter read from N. Haven in answer to a letter of two of the elders to them, it was voted, unanimously, that the church doth stand to the former vote and judgment, in the case of the elders, about the extracting the sense of the letters dismissive.'"

The following vote alone shows a lingering regard for the spiritual welfare of the members, in the midst of all this strife:—

"At a publick church meeting, on the 13 of the 10 mo., 1669, it was agreed on and concluded by a unanimous vote, that the elders should go from house to house to visit the families, and see how they are instructed in the grounds of religion."

LIFE OF ALLEN.

James Allen, the colleague of Davenport, was born June 24, 1632. His father was a minister in Hampshire, England. Allen entered Magdalen Hall, March 16, 1649; and at New College, Oxford,

The original protest of seventeen ministers charging the elders of First Church with suppressing letters, or parts of letters, is preserved in the Massachusetts Historical Society Library. Trumbull and Hutchinson discuss the matter more fully than is here attempted.



proceeded for an M. A., and became a fellow. He came to this country as an ejected minister, arriving at Boston June 10, 1662. He married Hannah, daughter of Richard Dummer, Aug. 18, 1663. She died at twenty-one, "probably without children."

His second wife, Elizabeth, whom he married soon after, was widow of the second John Endicott, and daughter of Jeremiah Houchin. Allen brought over with him from England a recommendation from Mr. Goodwin. Mr. Davis, a merchant in Boston, and a fellow-passenger of Allen, says that half a dozen of the "great church" were anxious, as he supposes, to secure him for assistant on his first arrival, "the Lord having given him large room in the hearts of the people," but some were at that time opposed to it. Though not called to be teacher on his first coming, he several times acted in that capacity. Eleazer Mather, of Northampton, writes to Mr. Davenport, of New Haven, on the "4th of 5th month, 1662, here is come with Woodgreene, one Mr. Allen, a young man, a very able teacher. He hath taught here divers times since he came."

In the year 1700 his name appears as one of the fifteen fellows of Harvard College.

His second wife died April 5, 1673, leaving several children, one of whom, Jeremiah, became Treasurer of the Province in 1715, and another, James, graduated from Harvard in 1689.¹

¹ Savage's Genealogical Dictionary of New England, Vol. I. 31. When Emerson was minister one of his posterity worshipped in First Church. Emerson's History of First Church, 157.



On Sept. 11, 1673, he married his third wife, Sarah, widow of Robert Breck, and daughter of Captain Thomas Hawkins.

Allen lived in a handsome stone house,¹ and was possessed of a large estate. "His wealth gave him the power, which he used, as a good bishop, to be hospitable." He steadily supported ecclesiastical order and government, but recognized the divine authority of Christ in all things, and the right of conscience to dictate his actions. He was jealous of the rights and privileges of the church, and would guard the latter from all encroachments. His third wife died Nov. 25, 1705. He died Sept. 22, 1710, at the age of seventy-eight years, "forty-six of which he had been a member, and forty-two a vigilant ruler and instructor of the church."

"During the six years, ending in 1710, twenty-four men and sixty-six women had been admitted into the church. In the same period the number of baptisms was two hundred and two, — one hundred and thirteen males and eighty-nine females."²

¹ Drake's Landmarks of Boston, 363.

² Emerson's History of First Church, 157.

CHAPTER IV.

1671-1710.

JAMES ALLEN, JOHN OXENBRIDGE, JOSHUA MOODEY,
JOHN BAILEY, BENJAMIN WADSWORTH, THOMAS
BRIDGE.

Condition of Religious Affairs down to the Present Period. — Trouble with the Baptists and Quakers. — John Oxenbridge. — Contribution for Harvard College. — Psalm-singing. — Penn Legacy. — Synod of 1679. — Other Churches invited to assist in carrying on Thursday Lecture. — Reconciliation between First and Third Churches. — Joshua Moodey. — Establishment of Episcopacy. — Arbitrary Conduct of Governor Andros. — Salaries provided for the Ministers at this Period. — Modifications under the new Charter of 1692. — John Bailey. — Benjamin Wadsworth. — Churches in Boston in 1698. — Formation of Brattle Street. — Union between Church and College. — Thomas Bridge. — Erection of a Parsonage.

WE have now reached a period in the history of the colony during which an important change was to take place in the relation of Church and State; taking away from the former that power which never properly belonged to it, and transferring the jurisdiction in civil affairs to the people. This reform, so vital in its operation, did not actually occur till 1692, when the new charter took effect; but the present place seems to afford a favorable opportunity for taking a parting glimpse at



the old order of things as it existed in the days of Cotton and Norton, when the church governed all. For nearly a quarter of a century no attack on the Puritan system of church government had met with more than limited success. The influence of one man, aided by the laws of the colony, had presented an impregnable barrier to any such attempts. The Quakers, to be sure, had caused some trouble, but nowhere had established themselves as a society of any consequence, except on the borders of Rhode Island. The number of Baptists was perhaps even smaller than that of the Quakers, and the attempt to establish an Episcopal church had thus far entirely failed. The influence of one man had done a great deal to keep this system in working order. "Whatever Mr. Cotton delivered was soon put into an order of court, if of a civil, or set up as a practice in the church, if of an ecclesiastical concernment."

It is not proposed to enter into an analysis of the peculiar form of church government as established by Cotton and others, and commonly known as Puritan theocracy. The experiment of governing a country on strictly Biblical principles, then for the first time tried, proved difficult to handle, and in the end impracticable. Such an undertaking was found to attempt too much, and instead of keeping out objectionable characters, it only offered strong inducement to them to come in.

The system, as first introduced, comprehended the enforcement of a strict rule relating to baptism.



The struggle came with the second generation of colonists. Serious objections began to be raised about baptizing the children of such as had not become full church-members. Synods were called "to allay the evils." These in their turn were strenuously opposed, and parties were divided into synodists and anti-synodists, the former finally carrying the day.

The part assumed by First Church resulted, as we have seen, in the refusal to ratify the Half Way Covenant, and the withdrawal of a portion of its members to constitute the Third, or South Church. The stern Norton had been dead more than five years when this separation took place. The age in which he lived is known as one of bitter intolerance as well as of earnest ecclesiastical controversy. England had set the example in adopting repressive measures towards the fanatical spirits with whom she was overrun. The charter of the Bay Colony was peculiarly adapted to foster similar notions.

The form of government attempted to be established by the colonists recognized not only the right, but the obligation to ward off "erratic spirits." The laws of the colony were framed so as to keep "police order" in religion. They recognized no distinction, save in kind, between religious and civil offences. In either case the offender might be fined, imprisoned, banished, whipped, put in the stocks, or hung. That our fathers made prompt use of these



means of enforcing discipline, the records will amply testify. No punishment was too severe for the religious offender. They were especially violent in their opposition to the Quakers and Baptists. We have seen how far his zeal in this direction carried Norton. He was instrumental in, if not directly responsible for, the execution of the Quakers on Boston Common, through the violence of his attack on what he called their blasphemous beliefs. But while we do not defend the course they pursued, we must be careful not to judge men like Norton too hastily. Harsh as their conduct was, we generally find some excuse for it in the extremely exasperating behavior of those with whom they had to deal. The Quaker spirit of that day was very different from the temper of the modern Friend. Those who were called Quakers then would scarcely be recognized by that name to-day. Their nature was aggressive, and they courted persecution.

Some of them reviled the magistrates, calling them "just asses"; and others, under pretence of prophesying, appeared in public without clothing, or simply wrapped in sheets, with their faces smeared with black paint, like demons denouncing direful judgments on the colony. Such exhibitions were dangerous as well as repulsive, and well calculated to shock the nerves of sensitive people.

The perpetrators had to be put down. If those who performed this task betrayed any undue zeal, we must bear in mind the perversity they encoun-



tered and the strict line of conduct they felt bound to pursue in dealing with it.

Allen and Oxenbridge, it is pleasant to record, do not appear to have encouraged any such procedure; but simply because, whilst they utterly abhorred the practices of these sects, they could not conscientiously interfere.

John Oxenbridge and wife were admitted into the church, March 20, 1670,¹ and on the 10th of the next month he was unanimously chosen pastor.

LIFE OF OXENBRIDGE.

John Oxenbridge was born at Daventry, Jan. 30, 1608. He belonged to the Surrey branch of the Sussex (Eng.) family of Oxenbridge. His grandfather, John Oxenbridge, a graduate of Oxford in 1572, and quite a famous Puritan preacher, was twice brought before the High Commission for an attempt to bring in a new form of prayer. In 1580 he is said to have been imprisoned for his zeal in the cause "and continuing in his course, subscribed *temp.* Archbishop Whitgift, the book of discipline." His son Daniel, father of John of Boston, was a graduate of Christ Church, Oxford, and a physician of high standing at Daventry in Northamptonshire,

¹ "At a church meeting on y^e 9th day of October, 1669, it was agreed on & voted wth a vnanimous consent y^t M^r Oxenbridge bee desired to bee Assistant to y^e present teaching officers in preaching y^e word of god."

"It was voted y^t Major Generall M^r Ting, Elder Penn, & Leiftenant Cooke do give this invitation of y^e church to M^r Oxenbridg as their messengers."—*Church Records*, 32.



and later in life in London, where he was made a fellow of the College of Physicians.

While at Daventry, Daniel married Katherine "daughter of Clement Throgmorton of Hasley, third son of Sir George Throgmorton of Loughton (the family being patrons of Southam), and so descended from Edward III." By her he had three sons, of whom the eldest was John, and four daughters.¹

Brought up under Puritan traditions and influences, like Cotton, Oxenbridge naturally became a disciple of that school. In 1623, at eighteen years of age, he was admitted as a commoner of Lincoln College, Cambridge,² and thence removing to Magdalen, Oxford, took his degrees of B. A., Nov. 13, 1628, and M. A., June 18, 1631. He was "distutored" in May, 1634, for making several rules of his own to be subscribed and sworn to by his scholars, "for their better government," which were inconsistent with those established by the college authorities.³

After leaving the university, Oxenbridge married his first wife, Jane, daughter of Thomas Butler of Newcastle, merchant, by Elizabeth Clavering of Cal-

¹ W. D. Cooper's sketch of the Oxenbridges of Sussex and Boston, Mass. (London, 1860), 5.

² Cooper says that the person admitted as a commoner at that date, according to Wood in his *Athenæ Oxonienses*, could not have been this John, who was then three years younger, and adds that "he was admitted a pensioner of Emmanuel College, Cambridge, April 28, 1626, and matriculated in July of the same year."

³ "The sentence distutoring Oxenbridge is printed in Wharton's *Remains of Laud*, Vol. II. 70."—COOPER'S *Sketch of the Oxenbridges, etc.*, 7.



laley, aunt to Sir John Clavering of Axwell. He then began to preach in England, but soon took a voyage with his wife, "who had an infirm body, but was strong in faith," to the Bermudas, "where he exercised his ministry." They returned to England from a second visit there, in 1641, during the Long Parliament, and visited various places. His will mentions Great Yarmouth, Beverley, Berwick, and Bristol, and to these should be added London and Winchester. In January, 1644, he visited Great Yarmouth, and there preached at half past eight o'clock every Sunday morning, before the regular time of service. He did this without pay for several months, but at his departure received £15 from the Corporation, who at that time had control of spiritual affairs. At Beverley, where he next engaged "as perpetual curate of the minister in the patronage of the Corporation," a similar entry appears on the Corporation books, showing "his disinterestedness in money matters." There it was, "£40 ordered to Mr. Oxenbridge and Mr. Wilson [his colleague]. . . . Mr. Wilson having had satisfaction by the parishioners for his part, and Mr. Oxenbridge requiring nothing." His first wife is described as "a scholar beyond what is usual in her sex, and of a masculine judgment in the profound points of theology"; and her husband, "a grave divine, and of great ministerial skill, loved commonly to have her opinion upon a text before he preached it."

After visiting Berwick upon Tweed, in 1650-51,



and a trip to Scotland in company "with another Congregational minister," in April, 1652, he was made fellow of Eton College, on Oct. 25, of the same year, in place of John Symonds, deceased. In the last days of Charles I., while at Beverley, Oxenbridge had secured the friendship of Andrew Marvell.

In a letter to Oliver Cromwell, dated Windsor, July 28, 1653, Marvell speaks thus highly of Oxenbridge and his wife. It appeared that Marvell had been living in his family by advice of Cromwell. He says:—

"I ow infinitely to your lordship, for having placed us in so godly a family as that of Mr. Oxenbridge, whose doctrine and example are like a book and a map, not only interesting the eare, but demonstrating to the ey, which way we ought to travell. And Mrs. Oxenbridge has a great tenderneese over him also in all other things. She has looked so well to him that he hath already much mended his complexion. And now she is busy ordering his chamber, that he may delight to be in it as often as his studyes require."

This happy state of things did not long continue, for soon after his wife became a confirmed invalid for five years, and died April 25, 1658, aged 37. She was buried at Eton on the 28th. In the Chapel of Eton College was erected a monument with a Latin inscription by Marvell in her memory "wherein 't is said that while he preached abroad, she would preach and hold forth in the house." The epitaph gave such offence to the royalists at the time of the Restoration, that they daubed it over with



paint. By his first wife Oxenbridge had several children, one of whom, Daniel, "of rare accomplishments as a Christian, a physician, and a scholar," died young and unmarried. After he had been a widower about a year, Oxenbridge married "a religious virgin named Frances, the only daughter of Hezekiah Woodward, the schismatical vicar of Bray, near Windsor." She died in childbirth in the first year of their marriage, at the age of twenty-four. The child, born July 25, 1679, named Theodora, married, Nov. 21, 1677, Rev. Peter Thatcher of Milton, Mass., and died in 1697.¹

While at Eton, on Jan. 25, 1658, Oxenbridge preached a funeral sermon on "Hon. Francis Lord Rouse, one of Cromwell's Lords, who died Provost of Eton." After the Restoration in 1660, he ceased to enjoy his fellowship, and while preaching at Berwick on Tweed, the Act of Conformity, in 1662, silenced him.

He then visited the West Indies and the Barbadoes, and finally "tumbled into" the New World in 1669. Before coming to New England, perhaps at the Barbadoes, he married his third wife, Susanna, "widow of Mr. Abbit." In October, 1669, previous to his acceptance of the call from Boston, he received an invitation from the church in Charlestown.

¹ "The descendants of Peter and Theodora Thatcher have been very numerous, and the family has always been held in high esteem in Massachusetts. Among them have been many eminent divines, lawyers, and merchants." The present minister traces his descent in the maternal line from this source.



Soon after his settlement as pastor of First Church, on "17: 10: 71," on motion of the Deputy Governor, the church unanimously voted to give him £50 by the hands of the deacons, to be "a small token of their Respect, Loue, and thankfulness vnto him."

In 1671 Oxenbridge preached the Election Sermon¹ from Hosea viii. 4, "and he warns his hearers 'not to backslide and fashion themselves to the flaunting mode of England, in worship or walking.'"

In 1672 he was one of seven ministers appointed to conduct the services on a fast day ordered to be observed, on June 23, by the General Court.

On May 15, 1672, on the death of President Chauncy of Harvard, John Oxenbridge and Vicar Oakes were added to the Board of Licensers of the Press, a very dignified body.

In 1673 he was one of the Committee of Ten to report as to the negative power of the General Court, and if it existed, "the best expedient for an issue, whether by lot or otherwise." In the same year he was joint executor with his colleague, James Allen, and Anthony Stoddard, of the will of Governor Bellingham.

Oxenbridge died suddenly of apoplexy. On Dec. 23, 1674, at Thursday Lecture, he was forced to

¹ A copy of this sermon, the only one probably in existence, is in the possession of the Massachusetts Historical Society. It was allowed to be printed on Oct. 11, 1672, and published in 1673.



stop preaching, "and was carried home in a Cedan." He died on the 28th, and was buried on the 31st with great solemnity in Cotton's tomb in the Chapel Burying Ground. His third wife survived him twenty-one years, and died in 1696.

Of his popularity as a preacher the church record amply testifies. During the short period while it was under his charge, the number of admissions to the church was eighty-one, fifty-four of whom were females; and ninety-one males and ninety females were baptized.¹

Of his preaching and literary abilities, Emerson says: "He is reckoned by the historians of Boston among the most elegant writers as well as eloquent preachers of his time. Like his great and good predecessors, he was sincerely attached to the Congregational interest; and the piety which he cherished at heart exhibited itself in his habitual conversation."

In his will dated "Boston in New England y^e 12th day of y^e first month in y^e year 167³/₄" probated in Suffolk County, Jan. 9, 167⁴/₅, besides a legacy of £20 to the elders and deacons of the First Church of Boston for the use of the church, he gives "to y^e publick Library in Boston or elsewhere, as my executors and overseers shall judge best, Augustine's workes in 6 volumes, y^e centuries in 8 volumes, y^e catalogue of Oxford library [and a number of other works]."

¹ Emerson's History of First Church, 125.



In the year 1672 the church contributed to the support of Harvard College. The following entry shows that many of the subscribers were anxious at the same time to have the college removed from Cambridge to Boston.

"10 (1) 7½. This Daye a *publicke Contribution* was made in the Congregation for the vse of y^e *Colledge* at Cambridge at the motion of the Counsell, and beside the publicke there was a *private subscription* wherein did many show their desire to haue it at Boston by subscribing for Boston 10 ffould, 5 ffould, 3 ffould, and y^e like.

"This Contributiō went ouer all the Country."

The earliest notice of psalmody is contained in the following: "17: 5: 72. Richard Cooke and Simon Rodgers were Desired to *set the psalmes* upon Saboth and Lecture Dayes."¹

By his will dated "the 29th of the 7th month, 1671," Elder James Penn of First Church left a legacy of £10 per annum to the elders and deacons of the church "for the maintenance of such poor *scholar or scholars* at the Colledge *as they shall see good*; and [his] dwelling house [he gives] to the first Church of Christ in Boston for euer." The former part of this legacy continues to be dispensed at the present day, and the list of beneficiaries appearing on the church record testifies to the good uses to which it has been put from the earliest times.

The poor of the church were not specifically provided for at this period from any fund or legacy.

¹ Church Records, 35.



But the following vote shows that they were well cared for notwithstanding.

"Att a meeting of the Church att my house January 31th 878 Voted unanimously y^t y^r shall bee a *Constant gathering* for the use of the *Sacrament* on Sacrament dayes.

" And poore.

" J^A. ALLEN, *Teacher*."

For a period of ten years after the death of Oxenbridge, Allen was left in sole charge of the congregation.

The year 1679 witnessed the calling of a synod by the General Court, "under an apprehension that the sins of the land loudly cried for the vengeance of heaven." John Sherman and Urian Oakes were chosen by the ministers to represent their body. Two questions were propounded at the synod. First: "What are the sins which have provoked the divine anger? Second: What are the means of removing it?" The result of the synod was communicated to the General Court. It contained a graphic sketch of the sins and calamities that were supposed to be weighing upon the community, and recommended that steps be taken towards a revival of religion. Most of the churches took occasion to renew their covenants and strengthen their religious faith. First Church did not respond very cordially to the invitation to attend the synod, being apprehensive, it would appear, of an attack on church liberty.



"Aug. 5th 1679, Voted by y^e Church upon an order of y^e Generall Court to send Elders & Messengers to a *Synod* to meet y^e 2^d 4th day in Sept.

"Tho wee doe not see light for y^e calling of a Synod att this time, yett y^r being one called: y^t w^t good theare is or may bee motioned may bee encouraged and evill p^rvented by o^r Testimony, wee are willing to send o^d Messengers to it: Tho w^ever is theire determined, wee looke upon & judge to bee no further binding to us, yⁿ the light of Gods word is y^rby cleared to o^r Consciences."

On the same day it was voted to allow the North and South churches to assist in carrying on Thursday Lecture.

"Aug. 5th 1679, Voted by the Church, upon an *order & advice of y^e magistrates*, y^t all y^e Elders of this Towne might joyntly carry on y^e 5th day Lecture.

"In Answer to y^e motion of y^e Honrd Magistrates about the Lecture; Tho as an *injunction* wee Cannot Concurr^e wth it, but doe humbly bare o^r *witnesse against it*, as ap^rhending it tending to y^e infringem^t of Church Libertie: yett if the Lord incline the hearts of the other Teaching officers of this Towne to accept of desire of o^r Officers, to give y^r assistance wth those of this Church, who shall bee desired to Carry on *theire* fifth day Lecture, wee are willing to accept theire help therein."¹

In 1682 the disagreement between the First and Third churches, which had continued for fourteen years, came to an end. An effort was made in that year to establish an Episcopal church in Boston. Both societies regarded such a church as a common enemy, and so both came together and united their

¹ Church Records, 39, 40. Diary of Peter Thatcher.



energies to prevent its establishment, The proposal for a reconciliation was voted by First Church, April 23, 1682.¹

A Motion to y^e South chh). At a meetinge of the first Church in Boston.

Question: Whether yo^a be willinge, keeping the Rule in its Intirenes & not Revokeinge yo^r Testimony thereto, viz. y^t Rule of Church order w^{ch} we haue p^{ff}essed Asent vnto, & is published as the Judgment of the Churches of new England platff of Discipl^e *Chapt* 13 throughout. To f^{ff}orgiue & f^{ff}orget all offences Respectinge our selues y^t we iudge haue iustly bin taken at our Desentinge Brethern.

Supposeinge y^s passe in the old Church,

Q. Will it not be expedient y^t it be Loucingly presented to the Disentinge Bretheren and y^t Society by a meet pson or psons, & y^t they be desired to signifie by writinge their Approbation of y^t Rule & iudgeinge any Deviation ffrom it to be Irregular, & if y^r Returne be Acceptable y^t it maie be Recorded by both in memory of an Happie issue of y^t vnComfortable & Longe breach and the begineinge of o^r desired peace, w^{ch} the Lord grant.

Amen.

Voted in y^e Affirmative Together.

Lett^r from y^e 3^d Chh in Boston, to the First—in Return to y^e above motion.

WORSHIPFULL, REUEREND, & BELOVED,—As we cannot but wth greeffe acknowledge the great evill y^t y^r is in Deuisions ffrom the sad Experience which we haue had of the Dangerous Influence which the Distance betwixt yo^a & vs hath had in y^s Land, so wee Desire Hartily to

¹ "In August, 1670, a formal proposal of accommodation was made by the new church to the old; but without success."—WISNER'S *History of Old South Church*, 11. The vote of the old church in 1670, allowing the other churches (North and South) to share in the conduct of Thursday Lecture, may possibly indicate a tendency to yield, but no decided step was taken until 1682.



Acknowledge the goodnes of god in moueing yo^r hearts to Looke Towards a Pascification, & wth Thankfullnes to Accept at yo^r hands y^e kind tender of Reconciliatiō, made vnto vs, to the ffurtheringe whereof God fforbid y^t we should willfully put any Obstruction, who Rather Desire to put all y^e handes we haue to the pmotinge of it: As beinge sensible of y^e Truth of w^t he intimated, 2 Sam. 2. 26, That if the Sword Devour ffor ever it wilbe bitternes in y^e end.

As ffor the Condicion of Accomodaciō w^{ch} hath been p^rsented to vs ffrom yo^r selues by the wo^rshipfull Samuell Nowell esquire & the Reuerend M^r James Allen, we are fully and ffreely Ready to subscribe it. And as we haue Publickly & p^rticularly in the Last Sinod Acknowledged the Platfforme of Church Discipline w^{ch} was agreed vpon by the Elders & Messengers of the Churches to be ffor y^e Substance of it Orthodox, So we doe now in p^rticular p^rfesse y^t we doe belciue y^e 13 chapter of y^t Booke throughout to be Accordinge to Rule & the mind of god in his word Respectinge y^t case y^rin treated of, & y^t any Deviation y^rffrom is Irregular, & wherein any of o^r Sinfull infirmities haue been greiuous to all or any of yo^r Church we aske fforgiuenes both of god & of yo^r selues, And desire dayly to praye, what we know not Teach thou vs. And if we haue done Amisse we will do so noe more; ffor our selues we are Hartily Content That all things wherein we iudge our Selues to haue beene Agreied maie be buried in Oblivion.

The god of peace Direct yo^u to a good & Happy Issue- inge of y^s great affaire w^{ch} yo^u haue so Candidly begun, & Cover all the ffailings of his people vnder the Robe of Christ Righteousnes, Granting vnto vs all the blessinge of the Gospell of peace & to yo^r selues the Blessednes of Peacemakers.

To the Reuerend Mr JAMES ALLEN Teacher
and Mr JOHN WISWALL Ruling Elder
of y^e first gathered Church
in Boston
these

To be Communicated to y^e
Church.

Soe Praye,
worshipfull, Reuered, & Beloued,
yo^r Bretheren in the Lord Jesus Christ.
SAMUELL WILLARD,
in the name & wth the free & full
vote of the Bretheren of y^e 3
gathered Church in Boston.



Lett^r from y^e first ch^h in Boston, to the Third—in answer to their Lett^r.

At a meetinge of y^e first Church of Christ in Boston, Maye 7, 1682. .

HONNORED, WORSHIPFULL, REUEREND, & BELGUED IN THE LORD,—Wee Haue Receaued yo^r Returne by the worshipfull M^r John Hull Esquire & the Reuerend M^r Samucl Willard to o^r motion to peace, wherein yo^u expresse yo^r Thankfull reception & full Concurrence wth the Condidion of Accomodation therein mentioned w^{ch} we Declare to be Acceptable to vs. And wherein our sinfull infirmities haue been greivous to yo^u or any of yo^u, we mutually aske forgiuenes of god & you, And Desire all offences we iudge haue been giuen vs maye be fforgiuen and fforgotten, Desireinge to fforgiue others euen as we beleiue god ffor Christ sake hath fforgiuen vs.

And we further intreat that Both our motion and your Returne and this Conclusion maye be Recorded wth yo^u as it shallbe¹ wth vs in memory of a Happy Issue of our vnComfortable Distance & the waye of o^r peace.

Now the god of peace that brought againe ffrom the Dead o^r Lord Jesus Christ, that great sheeheard of the sheepe, by the blood of the everlastinge covenant make yo^u pfect in every good worke to Doe his will, workeinge in you that w^{ch} is most well pleasinge in his sight. Soe prayes,

Honnored, Reuerend, Beloued,
Yo^r-Bretheren in the ffaith & ffellowshipe of Gospell,
JAMES ALLEN,
JOHN WISWALL,
Wth the ffull & vnanimoys Consent of y^e bretheren.

¹ At the date of this entry it was not quite fully settled what particles and parts of the auxiliary verbs should be used as separate words. In this connection it may be as well to observe that the plan adopted in this work of preserving as much as possible the original spelling and combination of words in quoting from old manuscripts and records is sanctioned by some of the best authorities on the subject. The attempt, therefore, has been made to follow this course wherever such quotations are inserted.



In the year 1682, it appears by the church records that Sampson Bond was invited to preach. The vote was in the "affirmative and generally," but nothing came of it.

No assistant was settled till "11 (3) 84," when the following question was put:—

BRETHEREN,—The providence of god Haucinge brought m^r Moody into the Towne vnder such circumstances as yo^u know,

Whether yo^u be willinge y^t in y^e name of the Church he be Desired Dureinge his abode and Residence here to be Constantly helpfull to our Teacher in preachinge of the word of god amonge vs.

The Daye aboues^d presented
and Accepted.

JOHN WISWALL.

If yea, manifest by
your Signe.

Voted Affirmatively,
JAMES ALLEN,
JOHN WISWALL.¹

LIFE OF MOODEY.

Joshua Moodey, son of William Moodey of Ipswich in Suffolk, was born in England in 1633. His father came to this country soon after, and in 1635 became one of the first settlers of Newbury, Mass. After graduating at Harvard College in 1653, Moodey remained in Cambridge for some time and joined the church. He then went to Portsmouth in 1658, and in 1660 was settled as pastor in that place.² Though not ordained to the office until

¹ Church Records, 44.

² "In 1662, probably with a view to secure him an attentive audience, 'Ordered, that a cage be made, or some other means invented by the Selectmen, to punish such as sleepe or take tobacco on the Lord's day out of the meeting in the time of the publique exercise.'"—SIBLEY'S *Harvard Graduates*, Vol. I. 367.



1671, when the First Church was fairly organized under his direction, he preached stately from his first coming.¹ His trials during the period of his first settlement in Portsmouth, arising from the tyranny of Governor Cranfield, at last drove him to Boston, in 1684, to accept the call there offered.

"The p'vidence of God having Cast R^d Mr Joshua Moodey among us by Shutting the doore of Libertie for his ministry in his owne church att Portsmouth, wee doe earnestly desire that hee would Constantly exercise ministry wth o^r Teacher among us, untill hee hath free and open libertie to returne to y^m againe, w^{ch} wee expresse as an Explanation of o^r former vote, & o^r mind y^rin.

"Voted unanimously as Attests,

"JAMES ALLEN,

"JOHN WISWALL." ²

Moodey was esteemed for other qualities besides those of a religious teacher. On Feb. 28, 1655, he was chosen Fellow of Harvard College, and in 1684 (July 2), on the death of President Rogers, received an invitation to become his successor.³ In 1669, during his ministry at Portsmouth, he helped to raise £60 a year for seven years to be applied to the erection of a new brick building at Harvard College, the old wooden one being small and decayed. The address

¹ His interesting account of the gathering of this church is copied from the original records in Alden's "Account of Religious Societies in Portsmouth." Moodey was the first subscriber of the church covenant.

² Church Records, 44.

³ "In September the 'Overseers declared their consent to and approbation thereof'; but 14 October, 'the Committee appointed to treat' with him 'made return to the Overseers, That Mr. Moodey's answer was on the NEGATIVE.'" — SIBLEY'S *Harvard Graduates*, Vol. I. 375.



to the General Court, dated May 20, 1669, (undoubtedly written by Moodye,) giving the result of the subscription and the reply thereto from that body, acknowledging the gift, may both be found in the colony records.

In 1686 Charles Morton, pastor of the First Church in Charlestown, formed an association of ministers in imitation of one in Cornwall, England. Moodye was a member of this body, which met at the College once a month.¹ Its primary object was "the promotion of the gospel and our mutual assistance and furtherance in that work;" but matters of civil policy and government were often referred to them for advice. It was the custom at this time for the minister to preach a sermon to a condemned man, who was forced to give his attendance, and Thursday Lecture was appropriated for this purpose. On March 6, 1686, Moodye performed this dismal service in his "Exhortation to a Condemned Malefactor."

"Edward Randolph says, Moodye was one of the 'Five ministers of Boston who were in the Councill Chamber on the eighteenth of Aprill [1689], when the Govenr [Sir Edmund Andros] and myselfe were brought out of the Fort before them, writing orders, and were authors of some of their printed papers.'"

¹ James Allen and John Bailey were also members of this body, which discussed "Thirty important cases; among others, 'Whether Instrumental Musick may be used by the Church of Christ in His Publick Worship and Service.' Resolved in the negative: I will not hear the melody of thy Organs." MS. in Mass. Hist. Soc. Library. See *post*, Chap. VI.



In 1693 he returned to Portsmouth to resume the charge of his former parish, and ended his days as their minister in "usefulness, love, and peace." Cotton Mather—who preached his funeral sermon from Acts vi. 15: "Looking steadfastly on him, they saw his face as it had been the face of an angel"—says he died at Boston (where he went for medical advice) at Cotton Hill, being there on a visit, July 4, 1697, aged sixty-five. His days were probably shortened by overwork. In the manuscript journal of Rev. John Pike, a son-in-law of Moody, and formerly minister of Dover, N. H., it is written: "July 4, 1697, Mr. Joshua Moody deceased of a wasting consumption at Boston, sab: day, little past 5 afternoon."

A full account is extant of the trial and punishment of Joshua Moody at Portsmouth for refusal to administer the Lord's Supper in such form as was set forth in the book of Common Prayer. Previous to this proceeding against him, Moody had aroused the ill-will of Governor Cranfield by calling a member of the church to account for false swearing, and obliging him to make public confession before the church. The Governor, who, as was said, had already compromised the matter with the offender, and declined to allow any further proceedings to be taken, determined to have his revenge upon Moody for his zeal in this direction.¹

¹ "The warrant of commitment, dated 6 February, 1683-4, commanded the Marshal to 'apprehend the body and person of Joshua Moody, . . . and carry him to the prison on Great Island; . . . and the prison keeper, Rich. Abbott,' was 'required to receive . . . and keep him in safe custody, in the



In one of the letters which Moody wrote during his imprisonment by Cranfield, the patient fortitude of the man is clearly shown. "The good Lord prepare poor New England for the bitter cup which is begun with us, and intended (by man at least) to go round. But God is faithful, upon whose grace and strength I beg grace to hang and hope." This letter he signed "Christ's prisoner and your humble servant."¹ After suffering about thirteen weeks' imprisonment, by the interposition of friends Moody obtained a release, though under a strict charge to preach no more within the province, on penalty of further imprisonment. Previous to his coming to Boston in 1684, it had been decided at a town meeting in New Haven, on March 17, to in-

said prison, — he having been convicted of administering the sacraments contrary to the laws and statutes of England, and refusing to administer the sacraments according to the rites and ceremonies of the Church of England, and the form enjoined in the said statutes, — there to remain for the space of six months."

The court which tried Moody consisted of six members, four of whom were for a conviction and two for an acquittal. Of these four, Robie and Greene at first entered an acquittal, but were finally won over by Cranfield. "Not long after, Green repented, writes Moody, and made his acknowledgment to the pastor, who frankly forgave him. Robie was excommunicated from Hampton church for a common drunkard, and died excommunicate, and was by his friends thrown into a hole, near his house, for fear of an arrest of his carcase. Barefoot fell into a languishing distemper whereof he died: Coffin was taken by the Indians, and his house and mills burnt, himself not slain, but dismissed." — SIBLEY'S *Harvard Graduates*, Vol. I. 373, note.

¹ Mass. Hist. Soc. Coll., IV. 5.

"About 20 March, 1683-4, while Moody was in prison, he wrote to Increase Mather: 'I lately rec^d two letters, one from the church of N. Haven, a 2^d from 3 magistrates there, in order to my removing thither; & I may add a 3^d & 4th from Bros. Whyting & Collins to back their motion. But I am at present too fast fixed for moving.' " — SIBLEY'S *Harvard Graduates*, Vol. I. 375, note.



vite him to become their minister. His reason for declining this offer was because he still "felt bound to his former people, and would be as near as possible to them."

In 1685 Cranfield, the Episcopal governor, left the country in disgrace, and Moody had frequent intercourse with his Portsmouth flock until his final return, eight years later. His funeral at Boston was largely attended by ministers, magistrates, and others, and he was "interred in the tomb of the worshipful John Hull" in the Granary Burying Ground, the day before Commencement at Harvard. Moody was remarkable for his steady devotion to all that pertained to his sacred calling. Such tasks as he performed, part of the time in the midst of so much having a tendency to distract his attention, seem almost incomprehensible. He left ninety-three manuscript volumes, containing four thousand and seventy sermons, making an average of two and one half a week for a period of thirty years.

The success of his pastoral labors was wonderful, considering the many obstacles in his way. At Portsmouth, where his ministry was so interrupted, the number of admissions reached one hundred and sixty. But more worthy of remembrance than anything else, because so uncommon in those days, was his entire freedom from the witchcraft craze. Here again he suffered persecution, though in the end he was sustained in his course. One Philip Eng-



lish, a well-to-do merchant of Salem, was imprisoned with his wife for witchcraft in Boston jail, through the intercession of friends, and because the former place afforded no further accommodation. During the day they were allowed to go at large on bail, "on condition of their lodging in jail." Moody was at Boston at the time, and determined to set them free. With this purpose in mind he invited them to church, and preached from the text: "When they shall persecute you in one city, flee to another." Following up his sermon with some wholesome advice of a more private nature, he finally induced them to make good their escape. They succeeded in reaching New York, and there remained till the storm of persecution subsided. The service which Moody performed on this occasion was gratefully remembered by the descendants of English in after days, but at the time so great was the displeasure which his conduct created that it is said to have caused his removal from Boston back to Portsmouth.

"Moody was twice married, and had several children." His first wife was probably a daughter of Edward Collins of Cambridge, and sister of Rev. John Collins, of London. "His second wife was widow Ann Jacobs, of Ipswich, who survived him. One of his daughters, named Martha, married Rev. Jonathan Russell, of Barnstable, grandfather of Eleazer Russell, Esquire, of Portsmouth. Another, Sarah, the second daughter, married Rev. John Pike,



of Dover, N. H., several of whose children were baptized by their grandfather. The other daughter was Hannah. We do not learn that he had more than one son, Samuel, who was for several years a preacher at New Castle (Great Island)."¹ Of the direct descendants in the male line of William Moody, the father of Joshua, fifteen have graduated at Harvard College, nine of whom became ministers.

In his will Moody left particular directions about avoiding the extravagance so common at funerals, and further directs that "if I die in Portsmouth, my body shall be laid in the burying place there, under the great stone, by the side of the oak, where I buried my first wife and the deceased children I had by her."

According to Emerson,² in 1684, "sixty-four persons were admitted to communion in this decade of years [while the church was under the sole care of Allen], thirty-nine of whom were females. During the same period seventy male and seventy-seven female children were baptized."

We now enter upon a period of unusual disquiet. Andros, previously Governor of New York, came to New England in 1686, with a commission giving him almost unlimited authority. He early proved his hostility to the established system of churches, and manifested a strong preference for the Church

¹ Sketches of the Moody Family, 48, 49.

² History of First Church, 129.



of England. "The first Episcopal society in Boston was formed this year,¹ and the service of the Common Prayer book introduced. This was effected before the arrival of Andros. Randolph, who was active in forwarding the design, had suggested a contribution towards building an edifice for the church, but without effect.

"Andros, on the day of his arrival, applied for the use of one of the churches in Boston. The ministers and leading laity, who were consulted on this occasion, agreed that they could not with good conscience consent to such a use of their meeting-houses.² In the following spring what had been withholden as a matter of right was taken by power. The Governor, after viewing the three churches in town, sent Randolph for the keys of the South meeting-house, that he might have prayers read there; and without the consent and against the will of the proprietors, made use of their meeting-house for divine service."³

Emboldened by his success on this occasion, Andros made further attempts to dislodge Congregationalism and establish Episcopacy. It was provided, for instance, that no marriage should be legal unless

¹ The formation of the first Episcopal society took place June 15, 1686. The first meeting took place in the east end of the town-house (where the old State House stands). History of King's Chapel by Greenwood (1833), and by Henry W. Foote (1882).

² "Tuesday, Decr 21, 1686. There is a meeting at Mr. Allen's of y^e Ministers, and four of each Congregation: 'twas agreed y^t could not with a good Conscience consent y^t our Meeting House should be made use of for y^e Common pray^r worship."—SEWALL'S *Diary*.

³ Hutchinson, Vol. I. 420, note. Foote's History of King's Chapel (1882).



solemnized by an Episcopal minister. Not content with this, even, he abolished fasts and thanksgivings appointed by the court, and threatened to take away their meeting-houses. The proclamation of King James at last served to quiet the fears of the people.

First Church "voted [Nov. 6, 1687] by the unanimous consent of the brethren y^t An Adresse should bee drawne up To bee sent to his Majestie in y^r names to Expresse y^r humble Thankfullnesse for his gracious declaration of Libertie to o^r consciences and securing o^r liberties.

"JAMES ALLEN.

"Mr Chevers only mō y^t It might bee knowne w^t was writt, It was Answered y^r was a libertie for any y^t desired it to see it at my house, w^{ch} satisfied. Aft^r w^c was the vote forementioned." ¹

Matters at last came to such a pass, through the arbitrary course of the Governor, that Increase Mather was despatched to England to make personal intercession with the king. The result of this mission was to bring things to a satisfactory issue. The abdication of James and the deposition of Andros followed in rapid succession. Finally, the new charter was acceded to, and what threatened to be a serious revolt, if not rebellion, was averted.

The church records at this date contain a mixture of church and what we should call corporate matters. Some of the entries are interesting as showing the good care that was taken of the ministers, as well as the peculiar way of providing for them.

¹ Church Records, 45.



Thus, directly after a list of admissions for the year 1690, appears the following:—

“Sept. 24, 1690. Att a church meeting at the Teachers house was unanimously Voted, That M^r Jeremiah Dummer, Capt. Pen Townsend, M^r Tim: Thornton, doe assist the Deacons, acquaint y^m selvs wth the Church Treasure & use y^r prudence for Supplies for the support of the officers w^h Contribution is wanting for Preachers among y^m and particularly for wood for this yeere.”¹

The following year a similar entry occurs, providing £10 a year for wood for the teaching officer. At this period the teacher of First Church had the use of the ministry house, a plentiful supply of wood, and forty shillings per week. The following entry shows with what strictness the Sabbath day was then observed:—

“July 26. 91. Voted That each one will endeavor to p^rvent pollution of the *Lords day* by any of y^e familie, & y^e they will shutt up shops before Sun downe on the Last day of the weeke And keep y^r Children & servants wthin doores, God assisting.”²

From 1685 to 1692 the records show an increase of one hundred and ten members, of whom ninety-two are females; also two hundred and fifteen baptisms, of which one hundred and eleven are females.³

The charter of Massachusetts was declared void in 1686, and for a period of five years there existed a kind of interregnum. In the year 1692, when the

¹ Church Records, 52.

² Ibid. 53.

³ Emerson's History of First Church, 142.



witchcraft craze was at its height, the new or provincial charter went into effect, destroying the controlling influence of the church in civil affairs.¹ The change which thus took place was important in another respect. The doors were now thrown open to liberty of conscience, hitherto entirely restricted. The only class against which oppressive measures were still in force was the Jesuit.² In 1697, "while Stoughton was in the chair," we find a law of the province corresponding to the English law "against Jesuits and popish priests, and similar orders were passed in New York, prohibiting their residence in that colony; alleging that they instigated the Indians to attack the English and all other Protestants."³

In the year 1693 both John Bailey⁴ and Benjamin Wadsworth⁵ were invited to assist "the present" teacher in the work of the ministry. After the first invitation was extended to him, in November, 1693, Wadsworth continued to preach as a probationer simply until Sept. 8, 1696, "when he was inducted by the neighboring ministers, with a formality hitherto unpractised in the land;"⁶ and for a little more than

¹ *Ante*, Chap. III.

² Holmes's Annals, Vol. II. 5.

³ Bradford's History of Massachusetts (1620-1820), 94.

⁴ "July 17. Voted yt or Teacher doe invite Mr John Bayley to Assist him in Preaching constantly while among us 3 times in a month or oftner if hee please."—*Church Records*, 54.

⁵ "Voted this: Nov. 28. 93. At a meeting of the Church at my house unanimously yt or Teacher Invite Mr Wadsworth to assist him constantly once a month or any other way in Preaching, & any other help hee shall judge needfull."—*Ibid.* 54.

⁶ "Jan. 21. 96, Benjamin Wadsworth admitted a member. Aug 9. Voted anew a choice of Mr Wadsworth to teaching office. And 8th of September to



a year, until the death of Bailey interrupted the union, the church remained under the care of three ministers.

LIFE OF BAILEY.

John Bailey was born, Feb. 24, 1643, near Blackburn, in Lancashire, "of a very pious mother," who early trained him to "the service of the Lord." His father was a man of dissolute habits. When Bailey was but a child, his mother called the family together and made him offer prayer. Whereupon the youthful petitioner spoke with such effect as to turn the father from his evil ways and lead him into paths of righteousness. Bailey was taught grammar by Sagar, and the higher branches by the "famous Dr. Harrison," and began preaching at twenty-two in the neighborhood of Chester. He afterward lived about fourteen years at Limerick, in Ireland, and there had great success as a preacher. He was offered preferences, even a bishopric upon the first vacancy; but, like his predecessor Wilson, he spurned them all from a dislike to the requirements which they involved.

He was twice imprisoned for non-conformity. The first time was in Lancashire jail, during his ministry at Chester; the second was in Ireland. When before the judge on the latter occasion he said to him:—

bee the day of ordination. 5 Neighbour churches voted to bee sent to, the North & South in Boston, Charlestowne, Dorchester & Roxbury. Aug 30. Voted that after Mr Wadsworth ordination bee shall bee declared a Pastor to this church." This vote was executed 8 Sept. 1696. Ibid. 56.



“‘If I had been drinking and gaming and carousing at a tavern with my company, my Lords, I presume that would not have procured my being thus treated as an offender. Must praying to God and preaching of Christ, with a company of Christians, that are as peccable and inoffensive, and serviceable to his Majesty and the Government as any of his subjects, must this be a greater crime?’ The Recorder answered, ‘We will have you to know it is a greater crime.’”

For some time during his imprisonment in Ireland, his congregation daily visited him, dividing itself into seven parts for this service. But finally a stay was put to these proceedings. At last, in order to regain his liberty, he was obliged to accept the required condition and leave the country. He was not permitted even to preach a farewell sermon, but subsequently wrote an earnest letter of advice and exhortation.

John Bailey came to New England in 1684, with a younger brother, Thomas, who was also a minister. On his arrival at Boston, Bailey preached for Mr. Willard at the South Church, while the Watertown Church treated with him on the subject of a settlement. Judge Sewall has the following entries in his journal at this period:—

“Thursday, March 12, 1684¹. Mr. Jn^o Bayley preach’d from Amos 4. 12, and Mr. Willard from 2 Cor. 4. 16, 17, 18. Both Sermons and Prayers excellent. In y^e even 2 first staves of y^e 46th PS. sung. (p. 2.) “Not a Sabbath-day, Sept^r 20. Mr. Jn^o Bayley preached wth us all day: Mr. Willard at Watertown.” (p. 38.) “Fast-day, March 25, 1686. Mr. Willard exerciseth all day, Mr. Bayley being constrained



to keep house by reason of y^e Gout." (p. 75.) "Mr. Jn^o Bayley preaches his farewell sermon from 2 Cor. 13. 11, goes to Watertown this week, July 25, 1686." "July 28. A considerable Troop from Watertown come & fetch Mr. Bayley; some of ours also accompany them." (p. 89.)

He was installed at Watertown, Oct. 6, 1686, as the fourth minister of the church. The ceremony of laying on of hands was omitted on this occasion.¹ As Judge Sewall records it: "Mr. Bailey was not ordained as Congregational men are."

His brother Thomas was soon after chosen assistant, but died within a year or two, at the age of thirty-five. In 1690, the year after the death of Thomas, Henry Gibbs was called to supply the vacancy, and accepted the invitation, to take effect in November. Gibbs seems to have filled this place at intervals previous to a regular appointment, when the elder Bailey was perhaps suffering from illness. For some unknown reason, possibly on account of continued ill-health, Bailey removed to Boston in 1692. The next year he was invited to become assistant at First Church. Here he stayed until the close of his life.

His last days were attended with great suffering. He exercised great control over himself, however,

¹ The same omission took place at the installation of Charles Morton, who was settled over the First Church in Charlestown in 1686. "1686, Nov. 5, Mr. Moody in 's prayer [on that occasion] s'd, tho' that w^{ch} would have been gratefull to many (viz. laying on of hands) was omitted, or to that purpose." — SEWALL'S *Journal* (Feb. 1684-5-1703), 97.

See also Norton's letter to Hugh Boscawen, copied in Samuel Mather's *Apology for the Liberties of the Churches in New England*, 148. The ceremony was revived at the reordination of Bridge in 1705.



and was full of confidence in a better world to come. To those of his people who came to New England with him, and attended at his bedside, he said, "I charge you that I find you all safe at last." At another time he was uneasy in his mind, but even then was able to say that "the Master hath done all things well." When his friends who were gathered round him began to weep, he reproved them, saying, "Away with your idols; away with your idols." Shortly before his last illness, his journal says, "I was affected with what I read of Mr. Shewel of Coventry, who died in the pulpit. Lord, let me not die meanly; but in dying, bring much glory to thee." He seems to have realized these last wishes, for his closing words were, "Oh, what shall I say? He is altogether lovely. Oh, all our praises of Him are poor low things! His glorious angels are come for me." He died on Sunday, Dec. 12, 1697, at the age of fifty-three. In a sermon begun just before his fatal illness, but never finished, he used the text, "Into thy hand I commit my spirit." Cotton Mather preached his funeral sermon from the same words (Ps. xxxi. 5), on a very cold day (Thursday, December 16), in presence of a large company. His body was interred in the Granary Burying Ground.

The great characteristic of Bailey was forbearance, for which he had ample training. His preaching seemed to make a deep impression. John Dunton, the eccentric bookseller from London, says:



"I heard him upon these words, 'Looking unto Jesus,' and I thought he spake like an angel." By nature sensitive, he never shrank from any duty, but served his people in a faithful and conscientious manner. He used to say: "Three things I desire to get; patience under the calamities of life, impatience under the infirmities of life, and earnest longings for the next life." Another of his earnest prayers was that "we may not be of the number of them who live without love, speak without feeling, and act without life."

The journal of John Bailey, begun in Ireland, and brought over with him to this country, contains some interesting entries. Besides his Irish experiences, there are notes of a domestic nature. He seems to have been worried by accounts, for in one place he exclaims: "I'll proceed no further; it's enough to make a man mad to take notice of daily expenses."

The following is among his marriage records: "There was by the General Assembly sitting in October or November, 1692, an order made for Ministers marrying, as well as Justices of the Peace, which hath encouraged me to do it at the importunity of friends." Hutchinson says that "among our ancestors there was no instance of marriage by a clergyman during their charter; but it was always done by a magistrate, or by persons specially appointed for that purpose, who were confined to particular towns or districts. If a min-





Benjamin Wadsworth



ister happened to be present, he was desired to pray."¹

In a blank leaf of Bailey's book entitled "Man's Chief End to Glorifie God," presented to the Massachusetts Historical Society, there is the following memorandum respecting his descendants: "Now living of his offspring in Boston, Sarah Belknap and Abigail Willis, and three great-grandchildren, namely, Charles Willis, Jr., Nathaniel Willis, and Abigail Willis, May 28, 1771."²

John Bailey's widow became the second wife of Peter Thatcher, of Milton, Mass.

LIFE OF WADSWORTH.

Benjamin Wadsworth, son of Samuel and Abigail (Lindall) Wadsworth, was born at Milton, Mass., in 1669. His father was captain of a company of soldiers, and distinguished for his bravery in Philip's War. The spot on which he fell in battle (at Sudbury, Mass.), in 1676, is marked by a monument in memory of him, and of those who were slain with him, "erected by this (his seventh) son."³

Benjamin graduated at Harvard in 1690, and three

¹ Hutchinson's *History of Massachusetts*, Vol. I. Chap. V. 444.

² "The names of Willis and Belknap mark a number of his posterity in the female line; and there are now living two of his grandchildren, three great-grandchildren, and several of the fifth generation."—EMERSON'S *History of First Church*, 149.

³ "In 1852 the town of Sudbury, with the assistance of the State, erected a more enduring monument, which was consecrated with appropriate solemnities, November 23 of that year. The inscription upon it gives April 18 as the date of the battle, but perhaps it would be more correct to call it the 21st."—*N. E. Hist. and Geneal. Reg.* (1853), 17, 221.



years later received the degree of M.A. He was the first minister of this church who was educated at the neighboring University. Soon after graduation the First Church in Boston invited him to preach once a month for three years, until his final appointment in 1696.

Sept. 9, 1712, he was chosen Fellow of Harvard College, and June 10, 1725, at the age of fifty-six, became the President. His inauguration took place on Commencement day, July 7, 1725.

The following is an extract from his address on that occasion, in reply to the Lieutenant-Governor, who had invested him, as it were, with the robe of office:—

“I thankfully acknowledge the respect shown me by the Reverend Corporation, especially by your Honour, and the Honoured and Reverend Overseers. I freely own myself unworthy of the honour to which I am called. But I think the call of Providence (which I desire to eye in all things) is so loud and plain that I dare not refuse it. I desire to have my whole dependence on the great God, my Saviour, for all the wisdom and grace needful for me in this weighty service. I hope, by his help, I shall show all proper allegiance to our Sovereign Lord, King George, and obedience to his laws in this Province, and endeavour to promote the same among all I shall be concerned with. I shall endeavour to take the best care I can of the College, directing and ordering the members and affairs of it, according to the constitution, laws, and statutes thereof. I desire the earnest prayers of God's people, that the God of all grace would make me faithful and successful in the very great service I am called to.”



After his dismissal from the office of pastor, Wadsworth went to reside with his family at (Wadsworth House) Cambridge, and there continued until the day of his death, although, as will afterwards appear, in frequent intercourse with his former charge. He is said to have filled his new office in a useful and sensible manner. Without being quite as brilliant as his predecessor, Leverett, he betrayed at least no want of executive ability. He suffered a drawback in a serious failure of health soon after his removal. But although he never fully recovered, he was enabled, during the rest of his life, by prudent management to perform his labors without much interruption.

Wadsworth had a remarkable memory. He could quote from the Bible without reference, and was in the habit of preaching a carefully prepared sermon without the aid of the manuscript. It was perhaps owing to this remarkably retentive memory that his sermons, though clear, were apt to be rather diffuse. As a preacher he was "plain, practical, scriptural, and powerful," in doctrine thoroughly orthodox; as a pastor he was diligent to serve, and compassionate for the sorrows of men, regularly giving a tenth of his income in charity. He died, March 16, 1737, at the age of sixty-seven, leaving a legacy to First Church. Appleton, Sewall, Wigglesworth, and Foxcroft preached sermons, and Flynt, the oldest tutor of Harvard College, delivered a Latin oration upon the occasion of his death. A widow (who was Ruth



Boardman of Cambridge at the time of her marriage with Wadsworth), but no children, survived him.

"During the four last years, ending with 1696, eighty persons of the congregation became communicants, sixty-two of whom were females. One hundred and fifty-seven children were baptized within the same period, of whom eighty-three were boys."

Six churches had been established in Boston by 1698, besides Brattle Street, then just forming. They were: First Church, Second Church, Third or South Church, First Baptist, King's Chapel, and the Quaker Church, then in the neighborhood of Brattle Street, afterwards on Congress Street.

The formation of Brattle Street Church was heralded by a manifesto or declaration, published in November, 1699, which gave great offence to the other Congregational churches. What would now be looked upon as intermeddling was then viewed only in the light of wholesome rebuke, justified by the departure, in certain portions of the declaration, from the order of the gospel as recognized by Congregational churches. The perusal of a letter in the Massachusetts Historical Library, dated Dec. 28, 1699, simply signed "Increase Mather and James Allen," addressed to Mr. Colman, with no other prefix, gives one an idea of the disfavor with which the manifesto was received. Both of the ministers at the same time, on behalf of all the churches, declined to unite in a public fast with the new society.



At the close of the seventeenth century the ties which united the churches and the College were still very strong. By a then recent order of the General Court, every Congregational minister became an Overseer of the College, and in addition to this the President was always a minister of one of the churches.

1700.] A new century finds Allen and Wadsworth in charge of the congregation. The former, though advanced in years, still clung to the discipline of the church. The following was entered by him on the church records:—

"Feb. 10, 1701. Whereas there is a Print lately come forth, dedicated to the churches of Christ in New England, entitled 'Gosple order Revived'; wherein are harsh Expressions unmeet against the present practice of this church and the professed way of congregational churches therein; wee doe herein declare o^r utter dislike thereof, Tho wee doe not condemne those who conscientiously practise otherwise. And wee desire the Platforme of Church discipline may bee Reprinted, that those who are unacquainted with it may know it, w^{ch} is the directory of, o^r practice, so far as it agrees with the word of God. Voted by a very full consent." ¹

The old customs of New England churches, though fast fading out, still survived at this period. Excommunications were not uncommon at a much later date. A shadow of a distinction still existed between pastor and teacher, ruling elder and deacon. Puritanism in its spirit still held its own. From 1697 to 1704 one hundred and seventy persons were ad-

¹ Church Records, 59.



mitted to the church, one hundred and one of whom were women. Two hundred and ninety-two children were baptized during the same period, one hundred and forty-eight of whom were males and one hundred and forty-four females.¹

Allen had gradually retired from active service the last few years, on account of advancing age; though he died in office, as the senior pastor of the church. Thomas Bridge was ordained as assistant minister, May 10, 1705. The three Congregational churches in Boston, together with those in Roxbury, Dorchester, Charlestown, and Milton, were invited to take part in the ordination. Allen gave the charge, and laid on hands, together with Elder Bridgham and Elder Cope. The Revs. Increase Mather and Samuel Willard were also called upon to join in the latter ceremony.²

LIFE OF BRIDGE.

Thomas Bridge was born at Hackney in 1656, and educated at Oxford. His family are said to have been very wealthy. Shortly after his birth occurred the Great Fire in London. That terrible conflagration swept away the family mansion and all the contents, except "one hamper of plate, of all their large possessions." Among other treasures the family records disappeared. His origin and antecedents, therefore, cannot be fully stated. After

¹ Emerson's History of First Church, 151.

² Church Records, 99, 188.



graduating at Oxford, Mr. Bridge travelled extensively in Europe and the East. During this tour events occurred which changed his views, and induced him, on his arrival in England, to study for the ministry and finally take orders. About the same time he married Miss Elizabeth Turner, the only child of a widow who married William Paterson, founder of the Bank of England. In his will dated "Westminster, London, July 1, 1718," her stepfather says: "I give and bequeath to Elizabeth my daughter-in-law, only child to my first wife, Elizabeth Turner, relict of the late Thomas Bridge, minister of the gospel in New England, £1,500." Mrs. Bridge was also made a residuary legatee under the same instrument.

Before he came to New England to settle, Mr. Bridge led a wandering, yet useful life. After "some travels" to the Mediterranean, he visited the island of Jamaica, and there exercised in preaching; thence to New Providence, as it was called, where he was in great demand for civil and clerical offices, and was considered the chief man among the residents; thence back again to the West Indies, where at the Bermudas, then visited by a terrible plague, he labored so faithfully as to produce twenty-nine sermons in one month. At this place, as at Providence and Barbadoes, they tried in vain to induce him to settle.

His next removal was to West (New) Jersey; but after a short visit, he declined an invitation to remain,



and with his wife and four daughters came to Boston, March 17, 1704. His wanderings ceased with the call from First Church in 1705, except that he was allowed to accompany the commissioners, in their journey to Port Royal, during the months of July and August, 1707. His degree of M. A. (H. C.) was conferred in 1712. He died, Sept. 26, 1715, after a ministry of ten years in First Church, at the age of fifty-eight. "He made a sudden exit from the scene of his labors, leaving behind a name which is better than precious ointment, and four publications evincing his concern for the cause of righteousness and the welfare of mankind."

Judge Sewall, in his diary, says: "1715, 7^r 26. Between 11 and 12, Mr. Bridge expires. The old Church, the Town, the Province have a great Loss. He was particularly dear to me. His Prayers and Sermons were many times Excellent; not always alike. It may be this Lethargick Malady might, though unseen, be the cause of some Unevenness. The Lord help us duly to lay the death of this worthy person to heart! We may justly fear he is taken away from Evil to Come, Isa. 57." Cooper speaks of him in his diary as "a man of much piety, devotion, love, humility, meekness, &c., and of great fidelity in the discharge of his office." His prayers were particularly impressive. Prayer was his gift, and the Bible his library. Rev. Dr. Colman preached his funeral sermon. He was buried in the



Cotton tomb in the Chapel Burying Ground, Sept. 29, 1715. The church voted to take up a contribution on October 9, to defray his funeral expenses. The amount thus collected was one hundred and ten pounds, five shillings, and a penny; the funeral charges came to about one hundred and four pounds. It was further ordered that the sum of four shillings a week be allowed Mrs. Bridge "for the present out of the Contribution Boxe." The statement which Savage and others make, that in early life Bridge was a merchant, is pronounced on good authority to be incorrect.¹ One of his descendants² says: "Mr. Bridge educated his daughters as though they were sons, and preparing for Oxford; they were mistresses of the languages, painted on canvas and glass, were highly accomplished as needlewomen, and better educated generally than was common in Europe at this period. He was so strict on the Sabbath that they were not allowed to gather flowers or walk in the garden. He always had the shutters to the windows on the street closed on Sunday, that there should be no inducement to take their attention from graver and more important things." The names of these daughters were Elizabeth, Ellen, Lydia, and Copia. The second daughter, Ellen, "was born at the island of New Providence, Oct. 1, 1688, married Joseph Marion, 'Gentleman'" (who was the son of John Marion, Jr., deacon of First Church thirty-two years, from 1696

¹ Eliza (Story) White MS., *infra*.

² Ibid.



to 1728), on Thursday, June 7, 1711, and died Jan. 20, 1745, in the fifty-ninth year of her age. Besides these daughters, he had an only son, Thomas Bridge, Jr., born Oct. 31, 1709, who died in infancy of small-pox, to the bitter grief of his family. On the occasion of his baptism, Mr. Bridge for the first time joined his wife's name with his own on the church record, thus testifying to the importance of the event. The descendants of Bridge in the female line by the names of Marion and Story have been connected with the church, at different periods, down to the present time.¹

Various meetings were held in the year 1709, at the house of Mr. Wadsworth, to determine what should be done about buying some land for the use of the ministry. The church, not being in funds at that time, and being apprehensive of another purchaser, prevailed upon Jeremiah Dummer to buy the house and land owned by Captain John Balston on Water Street in his own name for £300, and retain possession until the church should be able to reimburse him for a transfer of the property. No sooner, however, had they bought the property, than, finding it inconvenient for the special purpose to which it was to be applied, the church "Voted" to sell "Said House and Land, wth the Land since added thereto

¹ This account of his family and antecedents is taken from the Eliza (Story) White MS., now in the possession of her daughter Mary B. Pratt, who has contributed from this and other sources much trustworthy and original matter for the foregoing account of her ancestor.



by Grant from the Town, and apply the proceeds for the erection of a convenient suitable House for the use of the ministry on the Church Land known by the name of Hollingshead's Lott."¹

"During the six years ending in 1710 twenty-four men and sixty-six women had been admitted into the church. In the same period the number of baptisms was two hundred and two, one hundred and thirteen males and eighty-nine females."²

¹ "This lot is the land since occupied by Chauncy Place Church, and the adjoining block of houses in Summer Street belonging to the society; and the house erected in 1710 was the one in which Drs. Chauncy and Clarke died, and which was taken down in 1807." — EMERSON'S *History of First Church*, 155.

Besides the Hollingshead lot, the church at this time owned a piece of land near what was once Fort Hill, and also a portion of the island of Great Chebacco in York County, on what is now the coast of Maine. Church Records, 100.

² Emerson's *History of First Church*, 157.



CHAPTER V.

1711-1785.

THOMAS BRIDGE, BENJAMIN WADSWORTH, THOMAS
FOXCROFT, CHARLES CHAUNCY, JOHN CLARKE.

Burning of House of Worship of First Church. — Sympathy and Aid from Brattle Street Church. — Building of New House. — Terms of Church Communion. — Old Account-Book. — Expenses of Building. — Seaters of the Congregation. — Who may occupy Pews. — Debt on the Building. — "Despair" of the Parsonage. — Admissions to Communion. — Call of Foxcroft. — His Lineage. — His Opposition to Episcopacy. — Support of the Ministry. — Weekly Contributions. — Call of Chauncy. — His Opposition to the Revivalists. — Controversy with Episcopalians. — His Book on Universal Salvation. — John Clarke appointed. — Chauncy's Mind and Character. — Great Earthquake. — Reading of the Scriptures in the Church. — Introduction of Choirs. — War of the Revolution. — Thursday Lecture. — Sketch of John Clarke's Life. — His Doctrine. — His Sudden Death.

THE disagreement between First Church and Brattle Street on account of the publication of the manifesto by the new society is said to have scarcely outlived the close of the century. Whether this be strictly accurate or not, it is certain that if any vestiges of the dissatisfaction survived to the present period, they were entirely dissolved by the aid and sympathy which the new church extended to the old on the occasion of the great fire of 1711.



"In addition to the Town-House, the Meeting-House where the first Church of Christ in Boston used to worship God was utterly *consumed by fire*, which began in a building belonging to Cap^m Ephraim Savage; it was generally said & concluded to be occasioned by one Mary Morse, being in drink."¹

The church passed various resolves on this occasion, thankfully accepting the offer of South and Brattle Street societies to make use of their meeting-houses, while they set about building a new one of brick. At the same time they fixed upon "Tuesday come sev'night [Oct. 9, 1711, O. S.], as a Day of Solemn fasting & prayer, on the account of the destruction of their meeting-house, & their dispersion occasioned by fire;" and appointed Elisha Cook, Isaac Addington, Elisha Hutchinson, Esq., James Gootch, and Samuel Bridge a committee to consider plans for a new meeting-house. The entries just referred to are dated Tuesday, Oct. 2, 1711. In the same month Mr. Colman, minister of Brattle Street, writes: "Our church invited the pastors of the First Church to preach with us in turns every Sabbath, and to join in the administration of ordinances. To which they, with their church, consented, and continued with us till May the 4th, 1713, when they took their leave of us with a very grateful letter, read publicly by me to our congregation, and went into their own house."²

¹ Church Records, 101, and Preface to Wadsworth's Sermon in 1713.

² Lothrop's History of Brattle Street Church, 61.



The letter of invitation from Brattle Street was as follows: —

BOSTON, Octob^r 12, 1711.

REV^d S^{rs}, — I think it meet to acquaint you that having stay'd our church the last evening after the Publick exercises of Worship, there past unanimously the following votes: —

1. That yourselves be desired, under the present awfull Providence, & till it shall please God y^t y^r meeting-house be rebuilt, stately & alternately to be & assist wth us in the carrying on the worship of God among us.

2. That out of the contribution weekly collected, *three pounds* be paid you every week.

3. That you be desir'd, if it may be, for the time you continue wth us, to joyn wth me in an equal administration of all Ordinances, in particular Baptism and the Lord's supper.

S^{rs}, These our desires wee accompany wth our thankfull acknowledgments of that good spirit of Brotherly affection, wherein you have come among us, & wherewith you have so kindly accepted our bounden Christian Respects. Wee also ask a further interest in your Love & prayers, & hope it will please God to make your presence and labours with us, from time to time, abundantly serviceable to his own glory & our spiritual Good.

Rev^d S^{rs}, Your unworthy Bro^r in the Ministry of Christ,
BENJ^a COLMAN.

The letter and vote of the South Church were as follows: —

BOSTON, Octob^r 12, 1711.

REV^d GENTLEMEN, — The Church of Christ which y^e stand related to, having considered the present dispersion of your flock, thrō the holy hand of God, in the late desolation of y^r meeting-house, thought it a proper & necessary expression of their Christian love & Regards to yourselves &



flock to pass the Votes, a copy of w^{ch} I now send you, according to their desire, w^{ch} you may communicate to your church if you think proper. The Votes were passed wth the greatest unanimity & readiness. It will be to the last degree pleasing to us to have the advantage of your gifts & graces in every article desired. The last Vote, w^{ch} invites you to administer the special Ordinances wth us in your turn, we hope will be agreeable to your Church; for sure we are it is a point of fellowship w^{ch} is Justifiable by the first & strickest principles of these churches.

The alwise God has holy ends w^{ch} he is carrying on by the present dark dispensation your people are under; and if it may but be serviceable to advance the spirit of Christ in this Towne, whereby we shall be better qualified for the society of the Assembly of the First born above, wee shall all have reason to bless & adore the Holy Providence of Heaven.

May our gracious God speedily & peaceably repair your desolations, building up and beautifying your church wth greater measures of his Holy Spirit; may all under your charge be your Crown and joy in the day of Christ. This, Rev^d Brethren, shall be allwayes the prayer of

Your affectionate Brother,

EBEN^R PEMBERTON.

Att a meeting of the Church in the South part of Boston, Octo^{br} 7th, It was Voted That the Rev^d M^r Bridge & M^r Wadsworth, Pastors of the ffirst Church in Boston, be desired, during the present dispersion of their flock, to carry on alternately one halfe of the work of preaching in this Congregation.

That the Deacons of this Church make the *same weekly allowance* to them for this service that they do to our own Pastor.

That the Reverend M^r Bridge & M^r Wadsworth be desired, also, to take their turns in the Administration of Baptism & the Lord's supper with us.

EBEN^R PEMBERTON.



In response to these invitations, First Church requested the "Rev^d Elders, in the name of the church, to render thanks to the Rev^d Mr Pemberton & Mr. Colman, & to their Churches, for their kind respects to us in their several letters of this Date."¹

"Whether in the Third or Fourth Church the congregation mostly worshipped is unknown. Mr. Wadsworth preached the Sunday after the conflagration in the Third Church; and the sermon delivered, together with the one last preached in the church consumed, and the first preached in the Old Brick, were published in a small volume, a copy of which is in the Theological Library."²

The following memoranda appear on the church records: "The old meeting-house³ was burned October the 2^d, 1711. The new meeting-house was occupied for the first time May 3^d, 1713."⁴ The work of building this house was prosecuted with great vigor. On Friday, Oct. 12, 1711, it was decided that the building should be of brick. This vote did not pass without "much debate and some difficulty, Deacon Tay and William Griggs having withdrawn without leave" before it was taken. At the same meeting a building committee, consisting

¹ Church Records, 102, 103.

² The Mass. Hist. Soc. Library contains an imperfect copy.

³ Very little is known about the appearance of this building, except that it was made of wood. The following is all that is contained on the church records with regard to it: "Jan. 12, 9th, Voted, y^t of Two Deacons, wth of brother Bridge, bee Assisting in judging of the convenience of making a middle door at the North side, and shutting up the two corner doors, and about a porch to the east side." p. 54.

⁴ Church Records, 104.



of "Cap^m Joⁿ Ballantine, Deacon Marion, & Capt. Wadsworth,"¹ and a committee of ten to obtain subscriptions towards the charge of a new meeting-house, were appointed. The committee chosen on October 2 to consider "Dimentions and models" (plans) for a new meeting-house, "*Reported*, That on due consideration and Advisement thereon, They are of Opinion the house to be *seventy-two* feet long, *fifty-four* feet wide from out to out, and *thirty-four* feet High up to the Plate." The report was accepted, with permission given at the same time to vary either of the dimensions a foot or two, "if the committee should see cause upon further advisement."² It was then voted "to send to England for a Bell for the meeting-house, or otherwise to procure one here, at the churches risque."

In spite of their scattered condition, the church was not unmindful of what was due to their welfare as a worshipping body of Christ.

"Att a Church Meeting, ffeb^r 29th, 17¹¹/₁₂, The following Proposals were voted Att the School House: first Church in Boston Proposed To the Rev^d Elders, That when persons desire *Admission* into y^e church they be examined of their knowledge

"Of the *Nature* of a Church,

"of y^e *Institution* of Ordinances & Officers,

¹ The building committee was afterwards increased to five in number; and, Mr. Wadsworth declining the appointment, three more were added to the original members, namely, Mr. William Welstead, Mr. James Gooch, and Mr. William Hutchinson. Church Records, 104.

² The same committee was requested "to obtain an enlargement of the Ground (if it may be) for raising the Meeting-House on, so that the House may stand in length facing towards the street." Church Records, 104.

"of y^e Authority & Rule given by Christ to the Elders,
"of y^e duty & Privilege of y^e *Brotherhood*.

"This to be *summarily communicated* to the church, together wth y^e Relation & Belief of y^e party desiring Admission.

"That *no objection* be made to the *Receiving* of any person professing ffaith in y^e L^d Jesus Christ, *Repentance* of sin, & having a measure of *scriptural knowledge* of the Order & Government appointed by Christ in his Church.

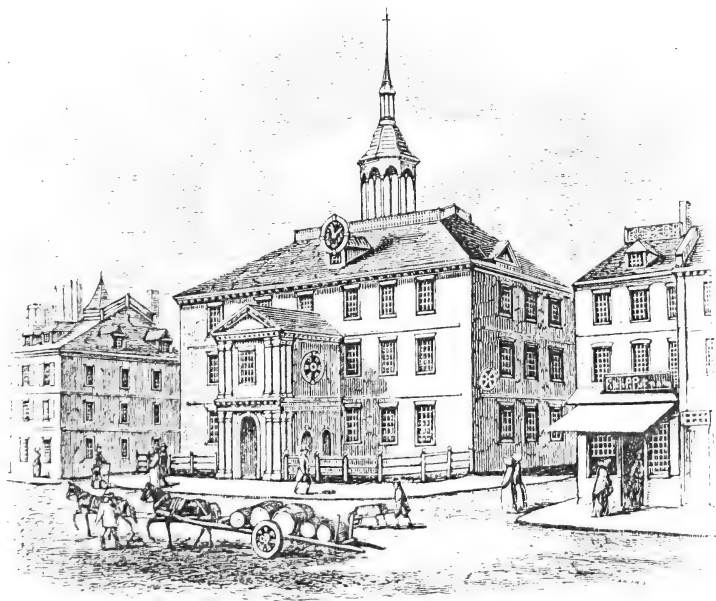
"*Althô he have not the persuasion which others possibly may profess, about some particulars that are matter of dispute among learned, Pious, & Holy men.*"

The corner-stone of the New (afterwards the Old) Brick was laid June 25, 1712. While the new meeting-house was building, some of the children were baptized at Brattle Street and some at the "South Meeting House." In the year 1712 the Election Sermon, which hitherto had been preached in First Church, was delivered in the "South Meeting-House," by Mr. Samuel Cheever, of Marblehead.

The following extracts are from an old "Journal" of the society, "being the first Book opened on rebuilding the Meeting-House, Dec^r, 1711." This book, still in excellent preservation, contains "the original rules respecting the pews and seats," and a full list of subscribers to the building account.

Besides subscriptions from members of the church itself, there are handsome gifts from private persons, not members, and from the following societies, namely, "South Church, Eben. Pemberton, Pastor;

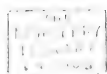




THIRD HOUSE OF WORSHIP; "THE OLD BRICK."

SITE OF JOY'S BUILDING, WASHINGTON STREET.

1713.





North Church, Messrs. Mathers, Pastors ; Brattle St., Benj^a Colman ; French Church, Mons^r Dallia ; Church of England, by Gen. Francis Nicholson ; Roxbury Church, Nehemiah Walter, Pastor ; from his Excellency, Gov. Dudley."

Sabbath day, May 3^d, 1713, first mett in y^e New Brick meeting house.¹ The first sermon preached in y^e forenoon by y^e Rev^d M^r Benj^a Wadsworth, from those words in y^e 2^d of Haggai : 9. verse. The glory of this latter house shall be greater then the former. The afternoon by the Rev^d. M^r Thomas Bridge, from those words in y^e 26. Psalm. 8. Lord, I have loved the habitation of thy house, and the place where thine honour dwells.

Att a Meeting of the first Church of Christ In Boston on Decem^r 14th : 1711, —

Voted, That M^r Jeremiah Allen be Treasurer (M^r Eliakim Hutchinson formerly chosen declining y^e Service) for the Receiving and paying out of the money that shall be Raised & Collected for building of the Meeting House, and that he answer the Draughts of the Committee for y^e worke or the Major part of them.

A True Coppy of-whats on file.

THO. BRIDGE,
BENJAMIN WADSWORTH, } *Pastors.*

At a Meeting of the Church, April 2^d, 1713, —

Voted, That D^r Cook, Coll^r Hutchinson, M^r Addington, M^r Eliakim Hutchinson, Coll^r Townsend, Deacon Marion,

¹ It was called the New Brick until the New North was built in 1714 ; then it became the Old Brick. Church Records, 105.

"The only durable relick of the Old Brick is deposited" in the cellar of the present meeting-house. "It is a thick piece of slate stone, about two feet long, which was taken from under a window, in the second story, on the south side of the Church. It contains, in two lines, the following record :—

BVRND To ASHES, OCTOBR 3, 1711.
REBVLIDING, June 25th, 1712."



M^r Wellsted, M^r Jeremiah Allen, M^r Gooch, be Seators of the New Meeting house now built, & that it be left to their prudence and discretion to dispose of seats and Pews as they shall think will be most for the good and wellfare of the Church and Congregation.

A True Copy of whats on file.

At a Meeting of the Old Church in Boston, Decem^r 11th, 1714, M^r Treasurer Allen haveing exhibited an Account of Receipts & Payments, and desiring that a Committee may be appointed to Audit y^e same, —

Voted, That Cap^t Green & Cap^t Wadsworth be a Committee to examine M^r Allen's Accounts, & make report to y^e Church.

True Copy, p THOMAS FOXCROFT.

1713, April 7th : At a Meeting of the Committee appointed for the Regulateing and disposing of the Seats and Pews in the new Built Brick Meeting house by and for the first Church and Congregation in Boston.

Present :

| | |
|----------------------------------|---------------------|
| Mess ^{rs} Elisha Cooke, | Decon John Marrior, |
| Elisha Hutchinson, | William Welsted, |
| Isaac Addington, | Jeremiah Allen, |
| Eliakim Hutchinson, | James Gooch. |
| Penn Townsend, | |

Upon Consideration had of what we Judge most for the present and future good and wellfare of the said Church and Congregation, And for y^e better Accomodateing of the Constant Auditory, as well as others of y^e neighbouring Congregations in the Town, and persons from other Townes, that shall attend the Worship of God in the said House at the Weekley Lecture, and upon Other Occasional solemnities, —

We have Unanimously Agreed and Accordingly do Establish the following Generall Rules and Regulations, That is to say, —



1. That no Seat or Pew shall be appropriated to any Particular person or family, but such as at present are or hereafter shall be of the Constant auditory & Contributors to y^e support of the Ministry.

2. That It be recommended to and is Accordingly Expected of the Proprietors of Pews that, upon Lecture days and other Occasional Solemnities, they receive and Accommodate soe many strangers, or of their particular Friends invited to take a seat with them, that the Pews may be Conveniently filled.

3. That no Seat or Pew appropriated to any Person shall be Transferred or Disposed of by such person to another without the Approbation & Allowance of the Committee for the time being, first had for the same.

But upon the Death or other removal of the Proprietor shall be in the Disposition of the Committee upon repaying to such Proprietor, his Executor or Administ^r, the first Cost and Charge by him disbursed of the making & Setting up of such Pew.

Unless, Where any of the family or Successors of the Proprietor removed as aforesaid are or shall be of the Constant Audience, or Contributors to y^e Support of the Ministry not less than fifty-two shillings p. annum, To be paid Quarterly: In which case they shall have and Enjoy the Priviledge of Such Pew, & in their absence y^e Committee to place suitable persons therein on the sabbath dayes.

4. That Each Person of the Constant Auditory who hath Contributed, or shall Contribute, the Sum of sixty Pounds or upwards towards the charge of Building the said House may have the Priviledge of a Pew, paying only five Pounds for the making and setting up the same. The rest of the Pews to be Disposed to such Persons and on such Terms as the Committee and they shall agree.

5. That all Persons keep the seat and places assigned them by y^e Committee, and remove not to any other seat



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| Deacon John Marston & Wm. Lane Bridges | Jeremiah Allen Esq. | Mr Deleovance and Mr John Lay | Grace Adington Esq. | Samuel Lynde Esq. | Hotel |
|---|------------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------------|----------------------|-------|

Pulpit

| | | | | |
|--|-----------------------|---|------------------------|--|
| The Rev ^d m: Tho: Partridge minister Ministerial Pew | M: John Ballantyne | Mel ^y Gerrish Jay & Klain Barratt | Captain Nath: Green | m: The Jackson m: Green Randolph m: Jn: Woolin |
|--|-----------------------|---|------------------------|--|

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| Thos & Geo W. & C. Day Wagworth | M: William Hutchinson | Eliakim Hutchinson Esq. |
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|---|--------------------------------------|--|
| M: James Gooch | | |
| John Buttolph | | |
| Em ^l Knight Jos: Appleton and J: Marshall | J.P. 59 Sam: Hill | N ^o 60 Will ^m Gray |
| Dr Hubbard and Geo: Gray | Josiah Quincy | Rob ^t Rand |
| Th: Chitt and Alex: Thayer | Jos: Blanchard Jr Henry Howell Jr | John Allen |
| Dr Deanning and Gy: Degez | Dr: Oakes and Inac Marion | Mad ^m Howard alias Hemypton John Hunt |
| | | Rich: Cullen and Dr: Ewtas |

The Maine Alley

| | | | |
|--|-----------------------------|------------------------------|--|
| Minist: Pew | Chen: Coburn Sam: Thwing | Th: White Jr J: Salter Jr | Nath: Brydell Esq. John Wheelwright Jm: Williams Knight Leonard |
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| | Jos: Green Esq. | D.P. 61 | |
| | John Joy | D.P. 62 | Joseph Hubbard |
| James Gooch N ^o 62 Capt J: Hubbard | | D.P. 61 And Gunningham | David Elson |
| John Townsend Esq. | M: Eliza Cooke junr | M: James Taylor | M: Tim: Lindale and Rooftesbie Greer |

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| m: James Burroughs | m: Jonathan Jackson | m: Gerdine Waldo |
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North Door

South Door

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|---------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------------|
| M: Henry Deering | M: William O'Brien | m: Mary Ann and Gust: Simpson |
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| m: Henry Bridgham | m: Jon: Lamy and Elizabeth | m: Jos: Williams and Dr: Endicot |
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| John Dwell and H: S. Combs | M: John Dobson | M: Jonathan Waldo | Eliha Cooke Esq. | Eliha Hutchinson Esq. |
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Porch

| | | | | |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|---|--------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Jeremiah Dunmore Esq. | M: William Welbree | Jm: Wadsworth and M: Samuel Green | M: Deborah Main | m: John Cory and Corn: Rand |
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| Mr Delevoriam and Mr John Legg | Mr John Ballantine and Mr John Jay and Sam Barratt | Captain Nath Green | Mr Tho Jackson and Mr Green and Mr In Woolin |
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|------------------------------|--------------------|--|---------------------|
| | oburn | Tho. Waite Jr | Nath Briffiel |
| | wing | Jr. Salter Jr | — Eg. |
| | | | John Wheelwright |
| Sam. J. | | | Jon. Williams |
| | q | N. 61 | Knight Leonard |
| Josiah | | N. 62 | Joseph Hubbard |
| Jos: Bly | N. 61. | | David Olson |
| Henry | and Barningham | | |
| Rev. Oak and Isaac Ma. | Mr James Taylor | Mr Tim Lindall and Rookesbie Greene | |

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| Mr. Francis Burroughs |
| Mr. Jonathan Jackson |
| Mr. Cornelius Waldo |

North Door

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|--|
| Mr. Henry Bridgham |
| Mr. Jon. Loring and Elizabeth Lowell |
| Mr. Jos. Williams and Elizabeth Endicot |

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| Mr. Jonathan Waldo | Mr. Jos. Wadsworth and Mr. Samuel Gunn | Mr. Deborah Main | Mr. John Cory and Ben. Rand |
|-----------------------|---|---------------------|--------------------------------------|

or place without y^e Committees appointment. That so Order and Decency may be Observed.

6. That all vacancys in seats from time to time hapening be in y^e Disposition of the Committee only, to be filled up by them.

7. That the names of the Persons, Contributors to the Charge of Building the House, and the Sums by them respectively paid thereto, be Registered in the Book kept by the Committee for the Carrying on of that worke, of the Accompts of the Cost thereof, As also a Registry to be made therein of the Disposition of y^e Pews, to whome, and the sum paid by Each Person for the same.

A True Coppy.

(Signed)

ELISHA HUTCHINSON,
E^m HUTCHINSON,
PENN TOWNSEND,
Jⁿ MARION,
W^m WELSSTEED,
JER. ALLEN, JR.,
JAMES GOOCH.

Att a Meeting of y^e Comittee this 18th March, 1716-17, It is unanimously agreed, Pursuant to y^e order above, the fifty-two shillings to be paid p. annum Quarterly (by y^e successors of any proprietors (of any Pew) that shall be removed by death or otherwise) be paid unto y^e Deacons of y^e Church.

By order of y^e Co^mittee,

(Signed)

JER. ALLEN, JR.

March 23^d, 1713. Church Meeting at y^e House of y^e Reverend M^r Bridge. The Committee appointed to Oversee the Building of the New Meeting house Acquainted the Church, That it had been represented to them there is an Arrear yet to be paid toward the charge of building the Ministry House in which M^r Bridge lives; as also That the Ministry House wherein the Rev^d M^r Wads-



worth lives is in Despair, and wants some necessary Reparations and Amendments to make it Tenantable and comfortable; Whereupon they had viewed the s^d House, and taken y^e advice of Workmen about the same, and made a Computation that it will demand One hundred and seventy Pounds to make y^e Necessary Reparations and amendments of the said House, and to Discharge the arrear for M^r Bridges House.

Reporting likewise That they well hoped when y^e Accompts of y^e Charge for the Meeting House are made up there will remain an Overplus of the money Contributed to that use.

Voted, That the said Overplus be applyed to y^e uses afores^d of the ministry Houses.

Voted, That what that Overplus shall fall short, the Church will make up what is wanting when it shall appear, by the Accoⁿ of the charge of the ministry Houses, how much will be needed.

| <i>Tryall Balance.</i> DR. | | | <i>Contra.</i> CR. | | |
|---|------|---------|--------------------------------|------|---------|
| | £ | s. d. | | £ | s. d. |
| To New Brick Meeting house | 38 | 49 08 1 | By Cash | 32 | 1 10 |
| To Henry Dering | 20 | 00 0 | By Subscriptions | 4 | 197 5 3 |
| To James Taylor | 10 | 00 0 | By John Eustas | 3 | 10 04 |
| To John Cary | 16 | 1 0 | By Dolbear & Jackson | 27 | 00 00 |
| To Ministeriall house, M ^r Bridge | 20 | 00 0 | By Samuel Lync, Esqr | 3 | 17 00 |
| To Ministeriall house, M ^r Wadsworth | 354 | 5 4 | By Benjamin Eustas | 6 | 00 00 |
| | 4269 | 14 5 | | 4269 | 14 05 |

BOSTON, Decem^r 27th, 1715.

Wee, the Subscribers, being appointed by a vote of the first Church in Boston, baring date the 23th of March, 1713-14, to be Audittors to Examin the Accompts of Jeremiah Allen, Treasurer to the Stock for the Building the New Brick Meeting house. Have accordingly Examined the same, & find the receiveings of Subscriptions amounting to forty-one hundred fifty-one Pounds four



Shillings and three pence to be right cast, & the Payments thereof amounting unto Three thousand Eight hundred forty-nine Pounds Eight Shillings & one penny, being y^e Cost of the Brick meeting house, w^{ch} payments are all vouch't & cast up right. And by the desire and request of the said Treasurer Allen have Examined the Accompt of Twenty Pounds in Arrears to the house belonging to said Church, wherein y^e Rev^d M^r Thomas Bridge, late one of the pastors of said Church, did dwell. As alsoe y^e Accompt of y^e repaires of the Churches house, wherein y^e Rev^d M^r Benjⁿ Wadsworth now dwells, Amounting to Three hundred fifty-four Pounds five Shillings and four pence, to be vouchers for y^e same & right cast.

| <i>Brick Meeting House.</i> DR. | | | <i>Contra.</i> CR. | | |
|--|-----|--------|---------------------------------------|-----|-------|
| | £ | s. d. | | £ | s. d. |
| To y ^e Cost of y ^e Brick meeting house . . . | 38 | 49 8 1 | † Subscription rec ^d . . . | 415 | 1 4 3 |
| To y ^e rest in Stock in y ^e Treasurers hands . . . | 301 | 16 2 | | | |
| | 415 | 1 4 3 | | | |

| <i>Church.</i> DR. | | | <i>Contra.</i> CR. | | |
|---|-----|-------|---|-----|-------|
| | £ | s. d. | | £ | s. d. |
| To M ^r Bridge's house . . . | 20 | 0 0 | † y ^e above Ballance . . . | 301 | 16 2 |
| To M ^r Wadsworth's house . . . | 354 | 5 4 | † Ball. due to Jeremiah Allen, Treasur ^r , to clear debt | 72 | 9 2 |
| | 374 | 5 4 | | 374 | 5 4 |

(Signed)

HENRY DERING,
JOHN LEGG.

"In the five years ending with 1715, one hundred and forty-six persons were admitted to communion, ninety-six of whom were females. During the same time eighty-six boys and ninety-six girls were publickly baptized."¹

Early in the year 1717 Thomas Foxcroft, a young

¹ Emerson's History of First Church, 165.



man not yet of age, was invited to preach once a week as assistant to the present pastor. His reply accepting the offer of settlement, made March 6, 1716-17, considering the youth of the writer, is perhaps worth transmitting in full:—

CAMBR., Mar. 23, 1716/7.

To y^e old or first church of Christ in Boston:

REVEREND, HON^{bl}, AND BELOVED, — It hath pleased y^e great Head of y^e Church (who turneth y^e hearts of his people as y^e Rivers of waters, and doth wondrous things which none can search out y^e reasons of) to Incline you to make choice of so unfit a Person as myself to settle in y^e office of a Pastor to y^e Flock. I am deeply sensible how unworthy I am of y^e dignitie, — how every way unequal to y^e duties of y^e holy function, the high calling w^{ch} is of God, excellent and difficult. As Indeed who is sufficient for these things, of y^e selves? But our sufficiencie is of God. Humbly therefore depending upon y^e grace of our Lord Jesus christ, without whom we can do nothing; as having good hope in y^e sweet and precious promise (Mat. 28. 20), *Lo, I am with you allway to y^e end of y^e world*, I do now with all Gratitude and Humilitie accept your call as y^e voice of God; and do solemnly promise and resolve (if y^e Lord permit, and account me worthy, putting me into y^e Ministry) to make it y^e Grand Study & Employment of my life to preach y^e unsearchable riches of Christ UNTO YOU, according to y^e commandment of y^e everlasting Gospel, for y^e obedience of faith, for y^e Perfecting of y^e Saints, for y^e edifying y^e Body of Christ, so long as it shall please God to continue me among you; y^e y^e might know y^e love which I have more abundantly to you all. And now under a just view of the Importance, weight, and Difficultie of y^e awfull work of watching for souls, & feeding y^e Flock of Christ, I beseech you, Brethreⁿ, y^e y^e strive



(together with me) in your prayers to God for me, y^t those Gifts and graces may be multiplied upon me, in y^e Diligent exercise whereof I may approve myself a ready Scribe, well Instructed to the Kingdom of God, and furnished to every good work; y^t I may Come unto you with Joy by y^e Will of God; and may with you be refreshed; that I may find mercie to be faithfull to y^e Interests of Gods Glory, and be wise to win souls; y^t my service may be accepted of y^e saints, and y^t I may be unto God a sweet savour in Christ, y^t so I may give up my Account wth Joy to y^e chief Shepherd at his Appearing; and y^e Lord grant unto us all y^t we may find mercie of y^e Lord in y^t day.

I am Your Affectionate Friend & Servant,

THOMAS FOXCROFT.

After his dismissal from the church in Cambridge Foxcroft was admitted a member of First Church, Oct. 27, 1717, and ordained to the office of pastor, November 20. The following ministers took part in the ceremony: "Dr. Cotton Mather began y^e exercise with prayer; Mr. Foxcroft preach'd from Coll. 1. 28, 29; Mr. Colman pray'd after sermon; Dr. Increase Mather, Dr. Cotton Mather, Mr. Colman, Mr. Sewal were desired with our Pastor Wadsworth to Impose hands; Mr. Wadsworth gave y^e charge, praying both before and after it; Dr. Increase Mather gave y^e right hand of fellowship. The whole affair was manag'd peaceably and quietly; I think there was much of God appearing in y^e matter; and I pray y^t it may be followed with long and rich blessings." Mr. Foxcroft was not quite one-and-twenty years old when thus ordained.¹

¹ Church Record, 108.



LIFE OF FOXCROFT.

Thomas Foxcroft was a grandson of Daniel Foxcroft, Mayor of Leeds, Co. York, in 1666, member of the Artillery Company in 1679, and imprisoned in April, 1689, as an adherent of Andros, "yet does not seem to have suffered permanent unpopularity." He was a son of Colonel Francis Foxcroft, warden of King's Chapel in 1689.

His mother was Elizabeth Dantforth, daughter of Governor Dantforth. The children of Francis and Elizabeth were Francis, born Jan. 26, 1685 (H. U.), 1712, and Thomas (the subject of this notice), born Feb. 26, 1697 (H. U.), 1714.

"Thomas was intended by his father for an Episcopal clergyman;" but after mature deliberation, and consulting with the Rev. Nehemiah Walter of Roxbury, a man of great intellectual force, the son at last determined to follow in the footsteps of his mother's family.

After studying theology for about three years, he received his invitation to preach in First Church with a view to a settlement. Although a mere youth when called upon by that society to assist Wadsworth, he showed no lack of ability to assume the trust. When the senior pastor removed to Cambridge, in 1725, he was left for two years as the only settled minister of the congregation. After Chauncy became associated with him in 1727, no change took place for forty-two years.



During their joint ministry the most perfect harmony prevailed between them. Although holding opposite views on the subject of religion and revivals, no variance ever arose between them at any time. Each allowed the other to express his thoughts as fully and freely as if they were in entire accord.

When the Episcopalian controversy broke out, Foxcroft, as might be expected from early training and associations, took an unusual interest in the result. As a contribution in opposition to the proposed establishment he wrote, in 1729, a "treatise characterized by uncommon vigor, which at the time attracted great attention, entitled 'The Ruling and Ordaining Power of Congregational Bishops or Presbyters Defended.'"

His sympathy with Whitefield in his attempts to promote a revival called forth a sermon, which was published in 1740, "occasioned" (as he says) by the labours and visits of Mr. Whitefield; and in 1745, an "Apology" in his behalf.¹ To this treatise an anonymous writer made a sharp response.

In 1736 Mr. Foxcroft was attacked by paralysis, which left him in an enfeebled condition. He con-

¹ In the Library of Harvard College there is a collection of Foxcroft's Sermons bound up in a single volume. Among them two at least are worthy of notice, namely, the sermon preached at the funeral of his mother, who died July 4, 1721 (to which is added a poem, by Rev. John Dantforth), published in Boston in 1721, which pays a beautiful tribute to her memory; and the sermon after the Earthquake, Nov. 23, 1727: "The voice of the Lord from the Deep Places of the Earth." Mr. Foxcroft's sermon at his own ordination is in a volume in the Mass. Hist. Soc. Library.



tinued to preach until the day of his death, but by no means as effectively as before his illness. He died June 18, 1769, almost seventy-three years old, and in the fifty-second year of his ministry. Dr. Chauncy preached a funeral sermon, which was published. In a letter written by Dr. Chauncy to President Stiles the year before Mr. Foxcroft's death, describing some of the most prominent men in New England at that period, he thus refers to one with whom, as has been stated, he differed widely in opinion: —

“ You may wonder I have not mentioned Mr. Foxcroft, as he is my colleague. It may justly be said of him that his powers are much beyond the common size. Few have been greater students in Divinity. His knowledge is pretty much confined within this circle. His reasoning faculty, before his last sickness, was in a degree of eminence; and few had a greater command of words, nor was he wanting in liveliness of imagination. He has written and printed several very valuable things, besides sermons, that will reflect honour upon him in the opinion of all capable judges.”

In his funeral sermon Dr. Chauncy says: —

“ He was a real good Christian; a partaker of the Holy Ghost; uniform in his walk with God in the way of his commandments, though, instead of trusting that he was righteous in the eye of a strict law, he accounted himself an unprofitable servant; fixing his dependence, not on his own worthiness, not on any works of righteousness which he had done, but on the mercy of God and the atoning blood and perfect righteousness of Jesus Christ. His writings evince a clearness of perception, copiousness



of invention, liveliness of imagination, and soundness of judgment. They bear testimony also to his unfeigned piety."

"Mr. Foxcroft had a son, Samuel, who was graduated at Harvard College in 1754; was ordained pastor of the church in New Gloucester, Me., Jan. 10, 1765; was dismissed in January, 1792; and died, much respected and lamented, March 9, 1807, aged seventy-two."

The church held various business meetings about this time, as appears by the records; and on Jan. 19, 1718-19, "*Voted*, That for y^e future y^e Deacons pay to our Ministers, M^r Wadsworth and M^r Foxcroft, six pounds ten shillings a week; y^t is to say, three pounds five shillings a week to each of them."¹

By a vote of the preceding year the deacons were instructed to keep regular accounts of all their dealings with the church funds. Emerson writes of the various religious associations in Boston, some of which were in existence at this date, as follows:²—

"There is a certain indefinable union among all the Congregational churches in the metropolis. Their ministers are united in holding an association at each other's houses, every other Monday, in supporting a Theological Library,³ in preaching a weekly lecture, and a quarterly

¹ Church Records, 109.

² History of First Church, 168.

³ "This institution," which was not founded until June 1, 1807, "invites, however, and receives subscriptions from both clergy and laity of all denominations." — EMERSON'S *History of First Church*, 168, note. [It formerly occupied the vestry of Chauncy Street meeting-house.]



charity lecture; and the several congregations tacitly agree in attending these lectures, and favoring these institutions."

On March 4, 1720, an ante-communion or preparatory lecture was established. Dr. Colman, of Brattle Street, preached the first sermon. First Church and Brattle Street united in sustaining this lecture on Friday afternoon, once a month, for about a century. Federal Street, New South, and Purchase Street then joined with the older churches in sustaining a similar lecture at Federal Street on Thursday evening. The latter course was discontinued in the summer of 1837.¹

On June 16, 1725, the church met and solemnly considered a message from the Overseers of Harvard College, making choice of their minister, Benjamin Wadsworth, for President. After some deliberation he was allowed "to accept the call," with much regret expressed on both sides at the separation.²

Notwithstanding his removal Wadsworth kept up his connection with the church by preaching for a time as usual, as the following order will show:—

"Whereas the Deacons did not see cause, for the *three last Sabbaths* on which our late Rev^d Pastor, M^r Wadsworth, preach'd to us, to carry him what had been his weekly salary; and whereas they have omitted this season to pay him his usual wood-money: Therefore ordered,

¹ Church Records, 110. Lothrop's History of Brattle Street Church, 66, 67.

² Church Records, 114.



that the sum of *Twelve Pounds* be speedily paid him out of the publick Box, in consideration of his Preaching; and five Pounds more in consideration of his expence for wood."

On Aug. 2, 1725, the same day that this order was passed, it was resolved to hold a fast on account of the removal of Mr. Wadsworth.

In the earliest years of the colony the ministers were generally supported by free contributions. But from 1657 to 1834, at which latter date the Bill of Rights was amended, all the inhabitants of New England country parishes were taxed for the support of the ministry. Even corporations, without any souls to be saved, were still liable to assessment if they held land within a parish. The policy of fostering religion by means of taxation, derived from the mother country, maintained for nearly two centuries, and finally abandoned under the amendment to the Bill of Rights, in 1834, did not obtain in Boston during that period. There the system prevailed for a long time of providing for the support of the ministry by free contributions, until finally a province law was passed, "which authorized the respective congregations and societies in Boston to 'cause the pews in their several houses to be valued according to the convenience and situation thereof, and a new estimate to be put upon said pews from time to time, as shall be found necessary,' and then to assess taxes on them in proportion to their value."

The salaries raised for the ministers at this period



were very generous, considering the greater value which money then had, and the total exemption from taxation which the ministry then enjoyed.¹ They were provided for in First Church by means of weekly contributions, instead of quarterly collections, as is now the practice; and if the supply fell short of the required amount at any time, the deficiency was covered so far as possible by extra contributions.

On Oct. 12, 1726, the church added ten shillings per week to the salary of the minister. The stated weekly salary had been up to this date £4 (in addition to a supply of wood), established, so Foxcroft says, "by church vote some Time before, while Mr. Wadsworth was with us; tho I can find nothing of it in the records." It was the custom at this period also to give a newly settled minister a generous sum of money, "in token of the church, their love and regard," towards the new-comer.

At a church meeting on June 12, 1727, Charles Chauncy was chosen to fill the vacancy caused by the removal of Wadsworth. The vote stood forty-three for Welsted, sixty-four for Chauncy, and two scattering. The ordination took place on October 25. "Foxcroft opened with prayer; Chauncy preached from Matt. 28: 20; Prayer by Thatcher; Fellowship of the Churches by Mather. Colman presided,

¹ Colonial Laws of Massachusetts, Chap. XXI. Sect. 7. (See also Statutes of 1811, Chap. VI., and 1821, Chap. CVII. Sect. 6.) Repealed by Statute of 1828, Chap. CXLIII. Sect. 2. Buck's Ecclesiastical Law of Mass., 169.



and gave the charge, praying before and after." Wadsworth was prevented by illness from being present.

"During the twelve years ending with 1727, two hundred and forty-one persons had been admitted into the church, one hundred and fifty-six of whom were females. In the same time four hundred and seventy-four children were baptized, two hundred and fifty-eight of whom were males."¹

LIFE OF CHAUNCY.

Charles Chauncy was born in Boston, Jan. 1, 1705. He was the great-grandson of President Chauncy, of Harvard College. His grandfather, Isaac Chauncy, was minister of a congregation in Berry Street, London, and at one time associated with Dr. Watts. His father, Charles Chauncy, the youngest child of Isaac, came from England to settle in business at Boston. The mother of Chauncy was Sarah Walley, daughter of Judge Walley, of the Supreme Court of Massachusetts. His father died when he was only seven years old; and "into whose care he then fell," writes Emerson, "and by whom he was prepared for the university, I have never been able to learn." He entered Harvard at twelve, and received the degree of M. A. (in course) at the age of nineteen, "being regarded as one of the best scholars who had at that time received the honors of the institution."

¹ Emerson's History of First Church, 172.

It is unknown "where he resided, and under whose direction he studied, during the time of his leaving college, until he became a preacher." His call to Boston in 1727 has already been mentioned. During the early part of his ministry he does not appear to have attracted any particular notice as a preacher. His degree of D. D. was conferred by Edinburgh University in 1742. The visit of Whitefield first brought out the latent resources of his strong and active mind. His pen was busy in opposition to the efforts of that famous revivalist, and the several preachers who succeeded him and attempted to repeat the same performances. The first thrust was a sermon on Enthusiasm, delivered in 1742. The next year a larger work in the same vein, called "Seasonable Thoughts on the State of Religion in New England," was published. These works were followed by various sermons and letters, the latter addressed directly to Whitefield, challenging him to make defence or confess his errors. Dr. Chauncy reaches the conclusion that such tasks as these revivalists set themselves to perform not only do more harm than good, but are wholly and absolutely without any redeeming features. In this strong position he was at variance with most of the other settled ministers in Boston, although some of them saw much that was objectionable in the visits of the more uncontrolled "itinerants."

The Election Sermon in 1747 was delivered by Dr. Chauncy. In this discourse he expatiates on

the same injustice, as he esteems it, which forms the subject of a severe letter, addressed to his own church the same year by his colleague, Foxcroft, and himself. This letter complained of the suffering incurred by the ministers from the fluctuating nature of the currency. The rebuke was so little relished by the Legislature that they were in doubt about publishing his sermon, according to custom. When some one told Chauncy of their hesitancy, his characteristic reply was, "It shall be printed, whether the General Court print it or not. And do you, sir," he added, "say from me, that, if I wanted to initiate and instruct a person into all kinds of iniquity and double dealing, I would send him to our General Court."

Down to the Revolutionary period Chauncy engaged in various theological controversies, the first of which started from his Dudleian lecture, delivered in May, 1762, entitled "The Validity of Presbyterian Ordination -Asserted and Maintained." Another publication, called "Remarks upon a Sermon of the Bishop of Llandaff," expressed anxiety lest the appointment of bishops for America would tend to a forcible establishment of Episcopacy. He then adds, that "'our people' would never suffer their necks to be put under that yoke of bondage which was so sadly galling to their fathers, and occasioned their retreat into this distant land, that they might enjoy the freedom of men and Christians." This was followed by a controversy with Dr. Chandler of Eliza-



bethtown, N. Y., which closed, as far as Chauncy was concerned, with a treatise entitled "A Complete View of Episcopacy," published in 1771, and considered one of his most powerful productions. He took an active part in the events which brought about the Revolution, and made himself very obnoxious to the Royalists during that period. He was so strongly persuaded of the justice of the American cause that he had no doubt but what, if human powers were insufficient, heavenly hosts would come down to help us. When this provoked a smile or demurrer, he stoutly maintained his full assurance that such would be the result.

His work on "Universal Salvation" appeared in 1784. Previous intimations of the current of his belief were manifested in a sermon headed "All Nations Blessed in Christ," preached in 1762 at the ordination of Joseph Bowman.

With the appointment of John Clarke as colleague, in 1778, Chauncy retired somewhat from pulpit labors, but continued to preach at intervals to the end of his life. He died Feb. 10, 1787, in the sixtieth year of his ministry, at the age of eighty-two.¹

¹ "On Saturday morning departed this life the Reverend Charles Chauncy, D. D., A. A. S., Senior Pastor of the First Church of Christ in this town, having on the 1st day of January completed the 82d year of his age, and on the 25th day of October, the 59th year of his ministry. He was for some time apprehensive of his approaching dissolution, and was observed by those who were near him to be a great part of his time engaged in devotional exercises. At last worn out with age, he fell asleep in Jesus, in sure and certain hope of a resurrection, and a glorious life at the second



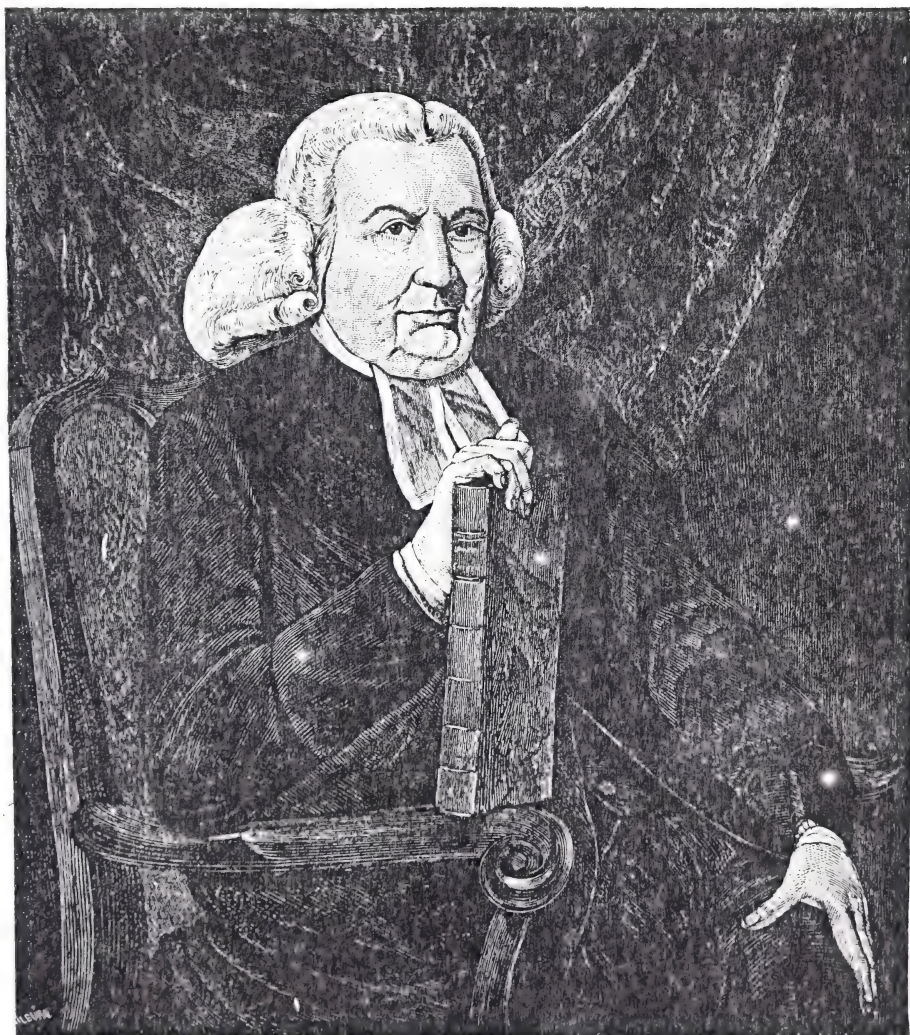
The church appointed Mr. Clarke to preach, and the Rev. Peter Thatcher to make a prayer at his funeral. The text of the sermon was from Matt. xxv. 21. By his first wife, Elizabeth, daughter of Judge Grove Hirst, and granddaughter of the elder Judge Sewall, Chauncy had one son and two daughters. By his other two wives (Elizabeth, married in 1738, and Mary, daughter of David Stoddard, married in 1760) he had no children.

As a preacher and writer Chauncy cultivated a rough and seemingly untutored style, as most forcibly conveying his meaning. He labored to avoid all arts of rhetoric, beseeching God "never to make him an orator." "One of his acquaintances, hearing this report, remarked that his prayer was unequivocally granted." "Yet," says Emerson,¹ "I have been informed by one of his hearers, who is an excellent judge of sermons, that Dr. Chauncy was by no means an indifferent speaker; that his emphases were always laid with propriety, often with happy effect; and that his general manner was that of a plain, earnest preacher, solicitous for the success of his labours." He had so slender a taste for poetry, that he is said to have wished that some one would translate "Paradise Lost" into prose, so that he might understand it.

appearing of his Lord and Master. His funeral is to be on Thursday (Feb. 15), precisely at half past two o'clock, p. m." — *Massachusetts Gazette*, Feb. 13, 1787.

¹ History of First Church, 184.





Charles Chauncy



Dr. N. L. Frothingham has written the following concerning his religious views :—

“As to the doctrine of the Trinity, though the subject had not risen into controversy in his day, I have always supposed that he was *non-Nicene* on that point. Such a supposition would certainly correspond best with the general complexion of his religious opinions. He was always classed prominently among those who were called ‘liberal’; for there were two parties then as now. An octogenarian parishioner of mine, who was one of his hearers, tells me that, long before his book on ‘Universal Salvation’ was published, some of his church left him to go to the Old South.”

A letter from Dr. Howard, of Springfield, to President Walker, describes his personal appearance and characteristics as follows :—

“He was little of stature, of a slender, feeble body, a very powerful, vigorous mind, and strong passions; and he managed them all exceedingly well. His manners were plain and downright,—dignified, bold, and imposing. In conversation with his friends, he was pleasant, social, and very instructive.”

Of his personal habits the same writer adds :—

“The Doctor was remarkably temperate in his diet and exercise. At twelve o’clock he took one pinch of snuff, and only one in twenty-four hours. At one o’clock he dined on one dish of plain, wholesome food, and after dinner took one glass of wine and one pipe of tobacco, and only one in twenty-four hours. And he was equally methodical in his exercise, which consisted chiefly or wholly in walking. I said, ‘Doctor, you live by rule.’ ‘If I did not, I should not live at all.’”



Many stories have been preserved illustrating his peculiar habits and temperament.

In the afternoon of the day on which his wife was to be buried, the religious services were appointed to commence at three o'clock. When that precise hour arrived, Chauncy turned to his colleague, Clarke, who was to conduct the exercises, and said, "*It is time to begin.*" Clarke said, "Will it not be well to wait a little while, as so few persons are present?" Dr. Chauncy answered in a very decided tone, "*Mr. Clarke, she is to be buried. Begin!*"

The Doctor was accustomed to make his pastoral visits (so tradition says) in an ancient chaise, driven by a colored servant equally ancient, who used to amuse himself at such times, when his master indulged in a nap or in profound reflection, by driving from one side of the street to the other and snapping up with the end of his whip any persons of his own shade who happened to be passing by at the time. These parish calls, although short and far between, were generally made on a Monday morning, interrupting, on that account, in most families at all events of the humbler sort, "the pressing domestic engagements peculiar to that season." They were not seldom also attended with more or less constraint, arising, it might be, from a habit of absent-mindedness, which sometimes got the better of him, or worse still, from an irritable state of mind incident to a press of work.

But in spite of outward appearances there was a large supply of tender feeling wrapped up in the inner man. Under a rough exterior Chauncy cherished a deep regard for his fellow-mortals. His peculiarities were largely the results of close study and a nervous temperament. "He was really a great and good man," writes one who was decidedly opposed to him in doctrine; "a man of profound learning and great integrity, of sound judgment and quick apprehension, of unaffected piety and most extensive benevolence. His own errors did not appear to do him any harm, but rather increased his love to God and man." He stands out in all respects as the foremost figure among his brethren.

Dr. John Eliot, who early in life was contemporary with Dr. Chauncy, speaks of him as "one of the greatest divines in New England; no one, except President Edwards and the late Dr. Mayhew, has been so much known among the *literati* of Europe, or printed more books upon theological subjects. He took great delight in studying the Scriptures. . . . His favourite authors were Tillotson, of the Episcopal Church, and Baxter, among the Puritans."

Another writer says: "Doctor Chauncy received the Gospel in its *simplicity*, after a long and severe study of the sacred Scriptures and the teachings of the early fathers; and as he believed the truths of Christianity were designed for the benefit of the people in common, and even people of the weakest



capacities, so he constantly endeavored to express himself in such a manner as to be easily understood." "Such was his love of the truth whenever he discovered it, and such the honest independence of mind which he possessed to a great degree, that he frequently advanced sentiments which did not comport with generally received opinions; he was therefore subjected to those temporary inconveniences which always attend on such as cannot fall in with all the common opinions. He placed the firmest confidence on the grace of the Gospel, and entertained the highest expectations from the mediatorial undertaking of Jesus Christ."¹

The successor of Dr. Chauncy, now in office (Dr. Rufus Ellis), writes as follows of his religious opinions and practice:—

"It has been the impression of some that Dr. Chauncy had not the courage of his convictions. We believe that there is no adequate ground for any such judgment. Like every one who begins to rejoice in the light of a new day, he was eager that the sun, which was to be brightness and blessedness to him, should not strike his fellows blind. Following his wise and merciful Master, he was engaged rather to fulfil than to destroy. It was quite right for him not to think aloud, and not to declare his mind—as upon the grave matter of universal salvation—until he had a mind to declare. The reader of his book upon this subject, if there can be any such person in our day, will be delighted to find how manfully, as well as tenderly, he has opened and argued his theme, and how steady is his appeal to Scripture, whilst at the same time he recognizes

¹ Massachusetts Gazette, Feb. 13, 1787.



most earnestly the absoluteness of the moral sense. He is much broader in his handling of this high argument for our larger hope in God than many modern writers, because in mercy he remembers truth and justice and the inevitable retributions which they constantly disregard and practically make light of. He has left little to be added to the Scripture argument. He is free from mere sentimentalism. He does not explain away the terrible and yet kindly warnings of Jesus, or deny that only a few are saved from great sinfulness and great consequent suffering, because he sees that in the end good, which is infinite, shall overcome evil, which is finite, and light, which is a reality, prevail over darkness, which is a nonentity. Very noteworthy for that time is his declaration that the worst foes of the Gospel are they who, undertaking to expound it, can make nothing out of the blessed Book which is not beneath reason and repugnant to humanity; and very hearty is his urgency that they shall not turn the best, if not the only, light man has into darkness. He still struggles more or less blindly with the letter of Scripture, but it is in the strength and confidence of the Spirit which breathes upon the Word and brings its truths to light, and searcheth all things, even the deep things of God. He is sure that what is true must be safe and good to know. You feel, in reading his pages, especially when he is giving the objector the opportunity of the fairest and fullest statement, that you are dealing with a reason and a conscience, and a singularly pure humanity, — a man more than abreast of his times, and yet too wise to be only the author of confusion. Professor Andrews Norton never bestowed any commendation upon a single soul of man who did not richly merit it, and that according to a very high standard. It is interesting then to read what he has written of Chauncy's book upon 'Episcopacy,' as 'the work of an able and learned theologian, still of value' [1837]; 'and that to a scholar it is striking and almost affecting that such a book should



have been produced at a time when, in our young country, there was a want of types and skill to print the Greek citations in Greek letters.”

The year 1727 is memorable for the great earthquake, “which took place October 29, shaking the whole country north of the Delaware River.” “It was on the night of the Sabbath, a calm and serene evening. ‘About forty minutes past ten o’clock,’ says Mr. Prince, pastor of the Old South Church, ‘was heard a loud, hollow noise, like the roaring of a great chimney on fire, but inconceivably more fierce and terrible. In about half a minute the earth began to heave and tremble. The shock, increasing, rose to the height in about a minute more, when the movables, — doors, windows, walls, — especially in the upper chambers, made a very fearful clattering, and the houses rocked and crackled as if they were all dissolving and falling to pieces. The people, asleep, were awakened with the greatest astonishment; many others, affrighted, ran into the streets. But the shaking quickly abated, and in another half-minute entirely ceased.’” In the morning a large assembly gathered at the North Church; and in the evening the First and South Churches were filled with attentive audiences. The record of First Church shows an increase of seven members on December 24, and six on December 31, following this event.

From March 9, 1728-29, to April 19, 1730, whilst their new meeting-house was building, South Church



Society worshipped in the Old Brick on Sundays "after our exercises were over."

In 1728-29, at a meeting of the church, it was suggested that in future the congregation be consulted in monetary affairs, such as the support of the ministry. The proposition, when first made, met with much favor; but for some unknown reason the privilege was not definitely accorded until Nov. 17, 1730.

As appears by the signatures appended to the records at this period, the elder minister usually presided at church meetings, except when motives of propriety compelled him to retire.

On May 18, 1730, it was voted that reading of the Scriptures, instead of the old Puritan form of expounding them, be hereafter discretionary with the ministers; but "the mind of the church is that larger portions should be publickly read than has been usual."¹

On June 12, 1732, the hour of afternoon service was changed from "2 to 3 o'clock for four or five months in the spring and summer," by this church and those in the "southern part of the town."

In 1734 an ecclesiastical council was held at Salem to consider and pass upon the disturbances in the First Church there. First Church in Boston was not represented at the council, and partly on that account declined to express an opinion when afterwards called upon. There are numerous in-

¹ Church Records, 127.



stances of this kind, as the record shows, where the church was invited to send delegates to attend councils called to settle church divisions. They seem to indicate a feeling of restlessness under the old rules and restraints governing church conduct and worship.

On Friday, Aug. 20, 1736, the church extended the right of baptism to conform with the practice of the other churches in New England; in other words, they ratified the Half Way Covenant.¹

At a church meeting, Feb. 13, 1738-39, a motion to fill the vacancy in the office of ruling elder occasioned so much discussion, — “both parties declaring their opinion against the divine institution of the office, — that the matter was dropped for the present.”

The first meeting of the church and congregation, controlled by a moderator, was held Sept. 10, 1739, when Colonel Adam Winthrop was chosen to preside. The pastor had hitherto supplied that office.

The connection between Church and State was not yet severed. In the same year, at the suggestion of the General Court, the church voted to contribute to maintain a lawsuit “about ministerial lands in South Kingston, to be brought before his

¹ The allowance of baptism to a child five or six years old, presented by its grandmother, one of whose parents was dead, and the other absent in a foreign country, which the church granted by a vote of June 23, 1723, indicates that the practice had not always conformed to the old rule. Church Records, 193.



Majesty in Council.”¹ In 1742 a committee was appointed to consider an enlargement of the vote of Nov. 17, 1730, allowing the congregation to meet the church in the transaction of temporal affairs, to include all matters “of common concern to the whole society.” The amendment was effected July 12, 1743, with the requirement that those of the congregation who wished to vote on such matters should be “only such Male Persons as give their Constant Attendance on divine worship, and contribute to the support of the ministry.”

It was the custom at this time “to hold the seats and pews for the most part in common,” making a new appraisal every year, which required each pew to give a certain amount weekly “towards the support of the ministry, and other necessary charges.” The method of disposing of the pews was through a committee of seaters,² chosen “every few years,” and like the present Standing Committee,³ composed of some of the most influential members of the society.

Pulpit exchanges were not so frequently indulged in at this period as in later times. The first time the suggestion was made it seemed so unusual that

¹ Church Records, 150 et seq.

² “1691. Voted by the Church att a meeting, Novemb^r 24, at my house, y^t Brother Sampson Stoddard, brother Browne & brother Parsons Doe order persons In Seating y^m in the meeting-house.”—*Church Records*, 53. Emerson says: “This, I believe, is still the practice in most of the religious societies on Connecticut River.”—*History of First Church*, 178.

³ The term “Standing Committee of the Church and Congregation” is first applied July 10, 1744.



the church thought best to pass a vote in order to sanction its propriety.

In 1740 George Whitefield first visited Boston. On Sunday afternoon, Sept. 21, 1740, the famous revivalist preached his first sermon in "Mr. Foxcroft's meeting-house," and on Thursday, September 25, delivered the lecture. The influence of his preaching was marvellous. The size of his audiences, and the striking effects which he wrought upon them, sufficiently attest the power of his eloquence. At times the meeting-houses could not contain the vast numbers which flocked to hear him, so that he was forced to preach in the open air. "The converts of the 'Great Awakening,' in which he was so prominent, were numbered by tens of thousands. If our figures were precise, they would but slightly express the influence of this wonderful movement. The thoughts of all the people were stirred for good or ill, and an abiding impression was made upon the minds and hearts of the communities which knew its presence and its power. It stands as a marked feature in the history of the times."

Opinions were divided as to the benefits to be derived from such preaching. Of the two ministers of First Church, the elder (Foxcroft) wrote what he called an "Apology" for Whitefield, which does not disclose any particular bias in his favor, but insists that he is entitled to a hearing. Chauncy, on the other hand, was opposed to allowing him even this privilege, on the ground that he unduly excited his



hearers and disturbed the order of the churches. The two associates differed very pleasantly on this subject, no suggestion of the slightest approach to a quarrel over it appearing from any source. The wide divergence of opinion between two such competent critics shows how difficult it is to form a fair estimate of the effects which revivals have upon the community. So many qualifications enter into the calculation that it is hard to say, in any particular instance, whether the result shows a preponderance of good or of evil.

But if carefully weighed and considered, the visits of Whitefield will be found to have left behind good rather than bad influences. Germs of religion were quickened which, in spite of undue excitement, worked in the minds and hearts of the less emotional and better educated classes, and expanded into larger growths. His preaching, in other words, served to modify the harsh doctrines of the old school, and suggest more liberal ones in their place; to quicken that steady growth from the too conservative to the more liberal, and hence, when properly restrained, more progressive forms of religion.

For the next ten years or more, the church is chiefly concerned with matters of business. The state of the currency, which largely consisted of province bills, made it extremely difficult, if not impossible, to settle upon any fixed sum for the support of the ministry. In consequence of this



uncertainty the pastors had been compelled a short time before to address a severe letter to the church, asking them to "pitch upon some method" for the proper supply of themselves and families with the necessities of life. The church, after hearing the letter read, appointed a committee to consider the matter, and their report in favor of a larger supply for that purpose was fully adopted at a subsequent meeting.

The rule requiring a person to make a "relation" before qualification to become a church member could be granted, was modified at this time (Lord's day, Feb^y 15, 1756), so as to allow the applicant to exhibit a "Confession of faith." "Accordingly, Cap^t G—— [Jeremy Green], the first male admitted since the Alteration, exhibited a Confession of his Faith."

The first attempt to form a choir was made at an annual meeting of the church on Tuesday, July 11, 1758. "It being suggested that a number of the Brethren, who were skilful singers, sitting together in some convenient place, would greatly tend to rectify our singing on the Lord's day, and render that part of Divine Worship more agreeable, it was Voted that the Committee appoint the Persons and Place."

The practice of "lineing out" the psalms (reading them out line after line, or two lines together, before singing, for the benefit of those without books, or the ability to read, as the case might be) prevailed



in some parts of New England even after the Revolution. But about the year 1720 singing societies began to be formed; and out of these the modern system obtained a foothold in many quarters. The new method met with decided opposition in country parishes, but in the larger towns, and in Boston especially, was carried out with little trouble.

First Church seems to have been one of the first to offer encouragement to the new practice. "On July 14, 1761, it was further voted that the 'large committee' be desired to think of some method to encourage and revive the Spirit of Singing in this Church."

"Aug. 2^d, Voted, that a number of the best Singers among us be desired to sit together in some convenient place in the Meeting House; that reading of the Psalms on the Sabbath day be omitted; and that a committee be appointed to confer with the pastor as to the introduction of a new version of the psalms."

On "Aug. 9, 1761, it was voted to introduce the version of the psalms called Tate and Brady, with such supplement of Dr. Watts' hymns as our pastors shall think proper."

For nine years after the death of Foxcroft, Dr. Chauncy remained without a colleague. During that period, partly covered by the siege of Boston, the record is very meagre.

The number of admissions during the forty-two years ending with 1769 was one hundred and



eighty-one, fifty-three of whom were males, and one hundred and twenty-eight females. In the same time one thousand and forty-nine children were baptized, five hundred and forty-four of whom were males, and five hundred and five were females.¹

In 1772 Brattle Street Society attended services in the Old Brick, while they pulled down their old meeting-house and rebuilt on the same spot. The invitation was accepted May 4, 1772, and a vote of thanks returned July 13, 1773. From July 12, 1774, to July 14, 1776, the record affords no entries. On Aug. 13, 1776, at a meeting of the church and congregation it was "voted that all the Leaden weights of the Windows of this Church be delivered to the Commissary of this Collony, upon Condition Iron Weights be placed in their stead & the difference paid in Cash." This is the only reference to civil affairs at this period which the church record furnishes. Dr. Chauncy was obliged to leave Boston during the siege. Thursday Lecture, which had been suspended during that interval, was, on the departure of the British troops from Boston, at once resumed. On Thursday, March 28, 1776, the Gazette said:—

"We hear that on the last Lord's day the Rev. Mr. Bridge, of Chelmsford, preached a most animating discourse from those words in the 2d of Kings vii. 7: 'Wherefore they arose and fled in the twilight, and left their tents, and their horses, and their asses, even the camp as

¹ Emerson's History of First Church, 180.



it was, and fled for their life.' This passage of Scripture is a good description of the late flight of our ministerial enemies, for they left their tents, and their horses, and a number of Tories for asses."

The succeeding paper (April 4) says:—

"Thursday last the lecture,¹ which was established and has been observed from the first settlement of Boston without interruption until within these few months past, was opened by the Rev. Dr. Eliot. His Excellency, General Washington, the other General officers, and their suites, having been previously invited, met in the Council Chamber, from whence, preceded by the sheriff with his wand, attended by the members of the Council who had had the small-pox, the Committee of the House of Representatives, the Selectmen, the Clergy, and many other gentlemen, they repaired to the Old Brick Meeting House, where an excellent and well adapted discourse was delivered from the 33d chap. Isaiah, 20 verses.

"After Divine service was ended, his Excellency, attended and accompanied as before, returned to the Council Chamber, from whence they proceeded to the Bunch of Grapes Tavern, where an elegant dinner was provided at the public expense; after which many proper and very pertinent toasts were drank. Joy and gratitude sat on every countenance and smiled in every eye. The whole was conducted and concluded to the satisfaction of all."

On January 19, 1778, the church unanimously chose John Clarke to be their pastor; and on Jan-

¹ The importance which once attached to the Thursday Lecture, when the pupils of the public schools were dismissed, and people generally suspended business, in order to attend the observance in the old church, might easily form the subject of a separate chapter. Dr. Frothingham gives a charming sketch of the time-honored institution in his "Shade of the Past" (*infra*, 301). See also "Discourse delivered on Occasion of resuming the Thursday Lecture, Dec. 14, 1843," by Rev. R. C. Waterston.



uary 25 the congregation unanimously approved the choice. Dr. Chauncy, who had just passed the fiftieth year of his ministry, and was now old and feeble, continued in office as long as he lived.

On "July 8, 1778, Mr John Clark, agreeably to a vote of this Church, was ordained Colleague Pastor wth Dr. Chauncy, by the laying on of the hands of a number of the Pastors from other Churches, deputed to this work by the venerable Council convened upon this occasion at the call of this church.

"CHARLES CHAUNCY, *Pastor*."

LIFE OF CLARKE.

John Clarke, son of John and Sarah Clarke, was born at Portsmouth, N. H., April 13, 1755. His mother was a daughter of Deacon Timothy Pickering, and sister of Colonel Timothy Pickering.

After a long residence at Portsmouth the family removed to Salem, where his father, who was by occupation a sea-captain, received an appointment as clerk in a public office. The son was remarkable at an early age for good behavior and scholarly tastes. He entered the Boston Public Latin School with the class of 1761, which included, among others, Thomas Aston Coffin, Bart., and William Eustis, the well-known governor of Massachusetts. He went to Harvard at the age of fifteen, graduating in the class of 1774. During his college course he gained the good esteem which belongs to well-ordered conduct and superior scholarship. His tutor,

Mr. Willard, afterwards president, said of him, that "perhaps there never was a student who passed through the University and went into the world with a fairer reputation, and few with more solid and useful acquirements." He received the degree of M. A. (in course) in 1777. After graduating he taught a few pupils, but devoted his leisure hours to the study of divinity. He early acquired a good reputation as a preacher, and had not long to wait before the First Church in Boston gave him a call to become the colleague of Dr. Chauncy. That venerable preacher welcomed him with great kindness, and they continued together in friendly association until the death of the former. Clarke then remained sole pastor until his labors also were ended.

Like several of his predecessors, Clarke died of apoplexy. As he was preaching in his own pulpit on the afternoon of Sunday, April 1, 1798, he was attacked by this malady and fell backward. He revived a little, but could only say "my friends," when he sunk again. He was then conveyed to his own house, soon became insensible, and expired at three o'clock the next morning (April 2), at the age of forty-two, and in the twenty-first year of his ministry. Dr. Thacher preached his funeral sermon, Friday, April 6,¹ from 2 Sam. i. 26. President Willard

¹ "The Committee of the First Church in Boston request the several societies of which the late Mr. Clark was a member, and also his friends and connections in general, to attend his funeral on Friday next. The procession will move from his late dwelling-house, in Summer Street, precisely at three o'clock, P. M." — *Columbian Centinel*, Wednesday, April 4, 1798.



also delivered a memorial discourse before his late congregation the following Sunday, in which he pays a glowing tribute to his friend. Two octavo volumes of Clarke's sermons were published after his death.¹ His degree of D. D. was conferred by Edinburgh University. His chief work was an "Answer to the Question, 'Why are you a Christian?'" It went through several editions, both here and in England. Another little book entitled "Letters to a Student at the University of Cambridge" (understood to be his cousin, Hon. John Pickering) would be of excellent service even to the present undergraduate. Besides these there were published, during his lifetime, three funeral sermons, the last on his colleague, Chauncy, and a discourse before the Humane Society of Massachusetts.

Dr. Clarke was in some respects just the opposite of his aged colleague. His style of composition and manner of delivery were more elaborate than those of Dr. Chauncy. He cultivated the fine arts to a greater degree than his associate (though not to the neglect of his profession), and was a member of the

¹ Jeremy Belknap delivered a sermon at Thursday Lecture which Dr. John Pierce says was "doubtless suggested by the then recent death of his beloved friend, the Rev. Dr. John Clarke," and is copied into his Memoirs. He adds, "my impressions on hearing which I shall retain while memory lasts!" — *Letter from John Pierce to Miss Belknap*, dated Brookline, 20th March, 1845. MS. in Hist. Soc. Coll.

For notice of Clarke's death, see letter from the Rev. Samuel Miller, D. D., of New York, to the Rev. Dr. John Eliot, dated New York, April 12, 1798. He says: "I was sorry to hear this day of Dr. Clarke's death. Alas! how fleeting is life! you have sustained a heavy loss. I have valued few men more upon a short acquaintance than him." Hist. Soc. Coll. MS. C. 41, F.



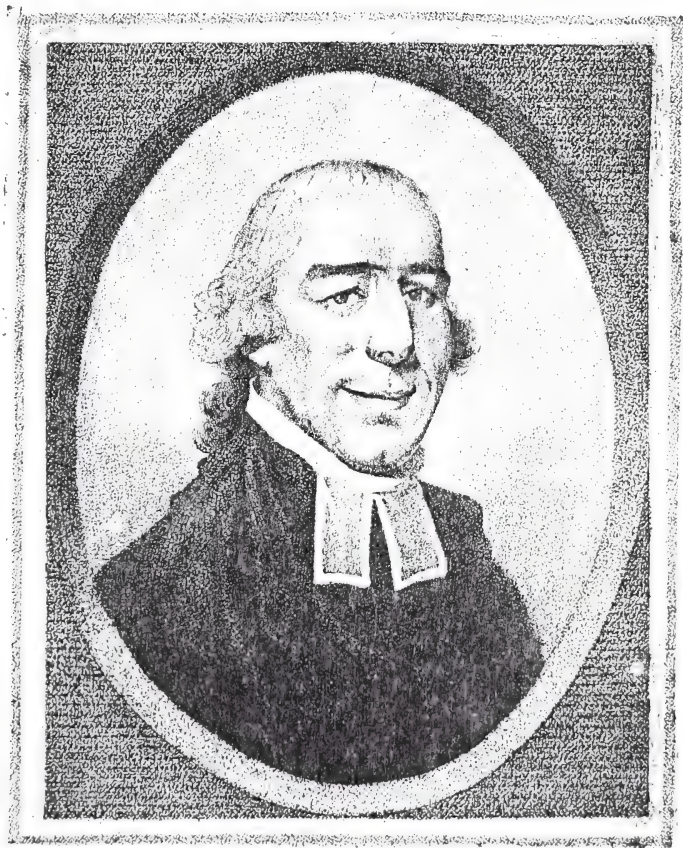
chief literary and religious societies in the Boston of his day. He was one of the founders and a counsellor of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, a member of the Massachusetts Historical Society, a trustee of the Humane Society, and one of the original projectors of the Boston Library. He prepared his sermons with great care, never writing more than one a week, and generally finishing that before Thursday Lecture. On this account his discourses sometimes lacked that brilliancy of effect which is more apt to accompany less labored productions. His manner of speaking was plaintive and pathetic, and well adapted to funeral occasions. His public prayers were prepared and memorized with great care. As a pastor his visits were frequent and most delightful, though of short duration. Instead of a general scattering on the part of the younger members of the household when they saw him coming, — as was too often the case in those days when the minister was making his parish calls, — the whole family was always glad to be present and listen to his cheery conversation.

In his religious views Dr. Clarke was understood to be an Arian; but, like so many other liberal ministers of that period, he rather rested in the "negative conviction that the doctrine of the Trinity is not a Scripture doctrine, than in any positive view of the subject." In the early part of his ministry he inclined to the doctrine of final restoration as laid down by



Dr. Chauncy, but in the latter part preserved strict silence on that subject. On one occasion (so Clarke himself relates) a stern old Calvinist, who had been listening to his preaching, went out of the church in disgust, saying: "Beans in a bladder; no food to-day for poor, perishing souls." His favorite author was John Taylor, of Norwich. To illustrate the difference between his temperament and that of Dr. Chauncy, the following story is told. It was the custom in that day for the Boston ministers to preach in regular turns on Sunday evenings to the poor people in the workhouse. The inmates of that institution, both male and female, were sentenced to imprisonment and labor, according to the nature of their offences, and in extreme cases to the penalties of the whipping-post. Mr. Clarke, when called upon to preach, "in the very fulness of his gentleness and courtesy, addressing himself chiefly to the frailer portion of his hearers, exhibited for his text and their instruction a part of Solomon's description of a virtuous woman, industriously at work with her maidens, and presiding gracefully over her household: 'She layeth her hands to the spindle, and her hands hold the distaff,' Proverbs xxxi. 19. When Dr. Chauncy came, — fixing his regards chiefly upon the male portion of his audience, and not suffering from any excess of sympathy with the other, — he preached from the words of the Apostle to the Thessalonians: 'If any will not work, neither shall he eat.'"





John Clarke



In personal appearance Dr. Clarke is described as "a little above the middle height; about five feet nine to ten inches. He was rather strongly built, and was somewhat inclined to corpulency, but only enough so to round off handsomely the person. His complexion was sallow, but not indicative of ill health. His face was rather long; his forehead of middling height and broad; his eyes dark grey, and animated in conversation; his cheek bones rather prominent; his nose somewhat long, but straight and handsomely formed; his mouth rather wide, and his lips thick, but his teeth good, and his chin strong and well formed. The general aspect of his countenance was calm and placid, but it was often lighted up, especially when he was conversing with young people, with uncommon vivacity." In social accomplishments he was *facile princeps* among the clergymen of Boston. His melodious voice and sweet and pleasant manners were in marked contrast to the set and formal ways of some of his elder brethren in the ministry. His youth, too, was by no means a drawback to his other accomplishments. In short, without any sacrifice of honesty on his part, he found a place in the hearts of all classes and all ages by his courteous demeanor, and by the gentle and loving influences which always accompanied his presence.

Dr. Clarke married Esther, daughter of Timothy Orne, of Salem. She lived to be over ninety, but for the latter part of her life entirely broken in



mind. They had four children,—two sons and two daughters.

Distinctions as to sex and quality were still, to a certain extent, recognized in seating the congregation. The men and women did not sit separately (as was the custom of the Old South Church at this period), but there were a few long seats, as they were called, which were known as “men seats” and “women seats,” and reserved for the humbler sort of people, probably the servants of the proprietors.

For six months (namely, from September, 1784, to March, 1785), while the meeting-house was being repaired and extensively altered, First Church accepted the kind invitation of Brattle Street Church to join with them in worship.

The first book of records contains no entries beyond the year 1785, with the exception of those relating to baptisms, which are recorded in that volume in an unbroken line from 1630 to 1848. That portion of the volume, nearly one half of its whole contents, is a study in itself, and full of interest to one who reads between the lines. One entry will suffice by way of illustration: “On the 6th of y^e 11th Moneth [1638], Fathergone, y^e sonne of o^r gone Brother Willyam Dyneley [was baptized],” which contains the sad story of the birth of a son following hard upon the news of the death of his father, who had perished in a severe snow-storm between Boston and Roxbury. The grief of the mother is said to have hastened the delivery of the



child, and caused her to commemorate in his name the sad bereavement.

In the nine years ending with 1778,¹ seventeen persons were admitted to communion, three of whom were males and fourteen females. During the sixteen years ending in 1785, the number of baptisms was one hundred and fifty, of which seventy-four were males and seventy-six females.

¹ It is unknown how many persons were admitted during the next seven years ending with 1785. The record shows twenty-four blank pages.



CHAPTER VI.

1786-1814.

JOHN CLARKE, WILLIAM EMERSON, JOHN ABBOT.

Organ Music in First Church. — Single Ministry. — Theological Changes. — Week-Day Lectures. — Thursday Lecture. — Communion and Baptism. — Invitation of Mr. Emerson. — Sketch of Mr. Emerson. — His Theology. — Visit to his Son, Ralph Waldo Emerson. — Church Discipline. — Building of a New Meeting-House on Chauncy Place. — Description of the Old Brick. — Surviving Worshippers in that House. — John Lovejoy Abbot, his brief Ministry and early Death.

IT was once said that there were but three kinds of beings whom God had endowed with animal sensation who were not charmed with the harmony of music; and they were the Devil, a Quaker, and an Ass. That the fathers of our congregation would have taken serious exception to this remark, in so far as it applies to the use of instrumental music in the worship of God, will appear from the following. The church had been anxious for some time to secure an organ to put in their place of worship, and for this purpose had repeatedly requested £500 from Mr. Brand Hollis, of London. Instead of obliging them with the money, however, he caused a small tract against the use of instrumental



music in the worship of God to be published and sent to Dr. Chauncy. The title of the tract is here given in full: "A Tractate on Church Music: being an extract from the Reverend and Learned Mr. Pierce's Vindication of the Dissenters. The Christian religion shines brightest in its own dress; and to paint it is but to deform it. Dr. Nichol's Defence of the Church of England. London, 1786." The dedication on the inside of the page reads: "This Tractate on Church Music is inscribed to the Reverend Doctor Chauncy and the Reverend Mr. John Clark, the Ministers; and to the several members of the First Congregational Dissenting Church in Boston in America." To give an idea of the contents the opening lines are quoted:—

"The subject before us may be resolved into a question, which, simple and uncompounded, is no other than whether it be fit and proper to introduce the use of instrumental music into the public worship of almighty God, as being able to excite in us devout and spiritual affections? Plain singing is universally admitted to be at once capable of raising and improving sentiments of rational piety and devotion, and is commanded in the New Testament. Where the heart and understanding are so intimately interested, like every other united act of praise, it is calculated to produce a good effect. But the addition of instrumental music should seem more calculated to divert and dissipate the pious affections of a reasonable service than to fix them upon their proper objects.

"And if express authority be pleaded in its behalf, such authority should be proved by other evidences than a general command concerning singing. It is not enough to



say that musical instruments are able to stir and cheer our minds; for it is not lawful for us to bring into use such things, of our own heads, into God's worship. Who knows not that wine has the like virtue to cheer men's minds and warm their affections? And yet it is unlawful to use it in the worship of God, except where it is commanded, in the Lord's supper. Vain, therefore, are these and such like allegations upon this head. And unless it can be proved that our minds are carried toward spiritual and heavenly things by some hidden virtue that nature has given to these musical instruments, or by a certain divine grace accompanying them, as God's own institutions, there is really nothing said to the purpose."

Letters of approval from Drs. Price and Kippis are subjoined to the pamphlet, Price fearing a "deviation from the simplicity of Christian worship" in the use of instrumental music, and Kippis finding "no foundation in the New Testament" for such practice. That the church had an organ before this tract appeared, and were only anxious to purchase a new one, would seem to follow from a vote that was passed in 1786, allowing Mr. John Greenleaf the sum of £30 for past services as organist. But the precise date when this first instrument was introduced is unknown. Shaw says: "In this church [the Old Brick] was introduced the first organ ever admitted into a Congregational church in this town." Probably the first instrument was only hired, as no mention of the purchase of an organ occurs until 1786. In 1789 "a motion to remove the organ from the society by making sale thereof" was lost by a



vote of three in the affirmative and thirty-three in the negative.

On the death of Dr. Chauncy no attempt was made to settle a colleague with Dr. Clarke, and the church has remained in charge of a single minister ever since. In 1789 the deacons were instructed hereafter to render an account of the church funds at the annual meeting.

There is very little to record during the last decade of this century, save the death of Clarke, and the invitation to his successor. The former has already been noticed; and before proceeding to describe the peculiar circumstances attending the latter a brief glance at the condition of religious affairs in and around Boston at this time may perhaps be of interest. The pulpits in this neighborhood, with rare exceptions, were then occupied by a body of liberal preachers. They did not form a distinct organization, but went under the general head of Arminians. It was a period of reaction, following upon the excitement attending the "Whitefieldian movement." At the same time there was on all sides an increasing unwillingness to yield implicit assent to the more rigid forms of Orthodoxy. This inclination to fashion for one's self a more liberal creed received ample encouragement from the changes which had taken place in civil affairs. The stirring events of the Revolutionary War had roused a spirit of free investigation into religious restraints and formularies kindred to that which had been so



successful in opposing civil coercions. "A more liberal political *régime*, if not logically, yet not unnaturally, postulated a broader theological platform." To define all the causes which had helped to bring about this result, it would be necessary to include the interest which many of the English Unitarians felt in the cause of freedom. Then, too, the struggle for Independence, while it was in progress, enlisted the energies of the clergy on this side of the water, and caused a relaxation of vigilance in spiritual affairs.

As a result of these various influences a class of clergymen and laymen who determined to cut loose from the "old moorings" had gradually grown up. That this resolve was deliberately taken would seem to follow from direct testimony as to their public utterances, and extracts from their published sermons and writings. The charge of secrecy, sometimes laid at their door, is satisfactorily answered in every instance by evidence of a similarly conclusive character. The truth is, that at this period "their opinions were not generally regarded as heretical." It was not until the lines were more sharply drawn that the wide divergence in doctrine became so startlingly apparent.

"When there ensued a revival of the earlier theology, in the new-born zeal and fervor it seemed impossible that such lax doctrinal views could ever have been tolerated alongside of the Trinitarian faith; and hence the theory that they must have



been held in secret. Yet if in secret, how could the facts be well known and thoroughly substantiated at the present day?" The liberal clergy, towards the close of the last century, had little or none of that religious fervor which so strongly characterizes their brethren of the earliest years of the present century. But they will long be remembered as "devout men," and steady upholders of Christian morals and ethics; pure and exemplary in their lives and teachings, and "diligent in their parochial and social duties." Many of the more liberal churches of this period retained precisely the same covenants under which they were originally gathered, so that applicants for admission to full communion were required to sign the ancient confession. In most cases, however, these covenants contained no specification of dogmas, because when they were first used there was no suspicion or anticipation of dissent from traditional Orthodoxy.

As to what may be called "the more private manifestations of religious faith and feeling," the practice was in marked contrast with that of to-day. There was a much steadier observance of sacred duties in those days than now prevails in most families. The morning and afternoon services in the churches were both of them attended with "unfailing regularity by all of every age who had no good reason for absence." The late John G. Palfrey, "who was pastor of a congregation second to none in position and wealth, says, during the



greater part of his ministry, occasional sermons, and those which were regarded as of superior interest, were uniformly preached in the afternoon, as the number of persons necessarily absent was smaller than in the morning.”¹ The Sunday school was as yet unknown; the only approach to it being the annual or semi-annual catechising, when the children of the parish gathered in front of the pulpit and answered questions (the brightest of them usually undertaking this duty) on fundamental points of doctrine; after which the pastor closed the services with a short address and prayer.

The week-day lectures were still fairly well attended. The older or Thursday Lecture retained a small portion of its ancient glory, — subjects of great importance being introduced for the first time on that occasion, while the ante-communion or preparatory lecture, as the other was called, was quite vigorously supported, though chiefly by women.

Both of these lectures took place by daylight. Night meetings were not encouraged, not so much from necessity, — although the want of proper facilities for lighting the churches certainly formed a serious obstacle, — as for their supposed bad moral tendency. On this account there was very little of what may be called religious activity, such enthusiasm as there was being confined to stated occasions and public observances. The number of communicants, however, was not small, though slenderly re-

¹ Quoted by Dr. A. P. Peabody in *Memorial History of Boston*.



inforced by the younger portion of society; and the rite of baptism, whether under the Half Way Covenant or without any required subscription of faith, was generally observed.

On June 11, 1799, the society determined to invite the Rev. William Emerson, of Harvard, to fill the vacant pulpit. A letter, dated June 17, was accordingly addressed to his society, asking their consent to his removal. The reply to this request, dated July 13, states that a committee has been appointed, and suggests that the two societies hold a conference. The freeholders and other inhabitants of Harvard had meantime (July 11) held a meeting, at which it was voted to concur with the action of the church, and to appoint a committee to join with the society and Mr. Emerson in a conference with a committee of First Church in Boston. Various letters then passed between the parties in interest, which resulted finally in the purchase of Mr. Emerson for the sum of one thousand dollars, "in compensation for the settlement given him by the church and society [in Harvard], and for the expenses occasioned by his removal from them to the First Church in Boston."¹

On Sept. 10, 1799, "Elders and Delegates of the churches of Shirley, Lunenburg, Groton, Pep-

¹ The First Church in Boston made the offer of settlement for one thousand dollars on Aug. 26, 1799, and it was accepted by the Harvard Church by letter, dated Sept. 11, 1799. The whole proceeding, namely, the removal of an ordained minister from the parish over which he had been duly settled, is described in one of the letters above mentioned as entirely novel, and occasioning great difficulty in the proper adjustment.



perell, and Lancaster," met in council at Harvard and approved of this settlement. Signed, "Daniel Chaplin, Moderator; Nath^l Thayer, Scribe." The formal call to Mr. Emerson was extended Sept. 20, 1799, and concurred in by the congregation September 24. Mr. Emerson accepted the invitation September 25, became a member of the church October 13, and was installed October 16. "The pastors and delegates who were invited to attend at the installation met in the Senate Chamber of the old State House at one o'clock of the day appointed."

LIFE OF EMERSON.

William Emerson, only son of William and Phœbe (Bliss) Emerson, was born at Concord, May 6, 1769. His grandfather, Rev. Joseph Emerson, of Malden, married Mary Moodey, daughter of Rev. Samuel Moodey, of York, and grand-niece of Joshua Moodey of First Church, Boston. His mother became a widow when he was only seven years old, but soon after married Rev. Ezra Ripley, the successor of her former husband as minister of Concord.¹ Birth and

¹ His father died at an early age. The following extract from an obituary notice of him is dated "Concord, Nov. 1st, 1776. On the morning of the Lord's day, the 20th of October last, died at Rutland, on Otter Creek, the Rev. Mr. William Emerson, pastor of the church of Christ in this town, in the 35th year of his age. His zeal for the liberties of his country, which appeared from the beginning of the present troubles, animated him to accompany his bretheren in the reinforcement lately sent by this State to our army at Ticonderoga as chaplain of a regiment. But the hardships to which he was exposed" proved too much for his delicate constitution, and brought on a fever which caused his death on the homeward march.



education therefore combined to fit Emerson for the ministry. At the age of sixteen he entered Harvard College. His course at the University was marked by good behavior and scholarship. Though suspended for a brief interval during that period, it was not, as he frequently affirmed, for any breach of duty on his part, but simply because he refused to testify to the misbehavior of others. He graduated in 1789, and shortly after delivered the Phi Beta Kappa oration with marked effect. For two years he taught school in Roxbury, with entire satisfaction to his employers. He then removed to Cambridge to study divinity, and before many months had elapsed was approbated for the ministry, and received a call to preach. After a short trial as candidate, the society in Harvard, Mass., invited him to settle as minister Dec. 21, 1791.¹ He accepted the call March 17, and was ordained to office May 23, 1792; but from the very first was "never quite at home" in Harvard. As was the case with John Norton at Plymouth, "his spirit did not close with them."² Having come to Boston in 1799 to preach the Artillery Election Sermon, he attracted the attention of First Church. The result was that the society in Boston very soon invited Mr. Emerson to settle as successor to Dr.

¹ "At a town meeting, Jan. 9, 1792, the vote of the church was concurred in, and £200 allowed for the settlement of Mr. Emerson, £100 to be paid in one year from the time of his ordination. The other £100 to be paid in two years, and £100 to be paid annually as a salary." — *Records of the Town of Harvard.*

² See Life of Norton, *ante*, Chap. III.



Clarke, who had died the previous year. His acceptance of the invitation, and the long and complex negotiations attending his removal, have already been mentioned. His friend and classmate, the Rev. Nathaniel Thayer, of Lancaster, preached the installation sermon. From the time of his removal to Boston Mr. Emerson seemed to devote more energy to preaching, and to show a deeper interest in intellectual pursuits. Like his predecessor, Clarke, he filled prominent places in the community, both public and private. He started and largely maintained the *Christian Monitor*, which continued to be published for a number of years; and in conjunction with others carried on the *Monthly Anthology* and *Boston Review*, which was first issued in 1804. He was also a member of most of the prominent literary and religious societies in Boston.

In May, 1808, a serious illness interrupted his labors, and seemed to forebode a fatal result. He recovered, however, from this attack, and continued for a while much as usual, until finally another trouble of a different nature obliged him to leave off work in the winter of 1810-11. He did not give up without a struggle, and persisted in preaching long after the state of his health warned him to abandon the attempt. His last sermon was preached at Thursday Lecture, March 14, "on Abraham's offering up his son Isaac," and was perhaps the most interesting and impressive discourse which he ever delivered.



In pursuit of health he then tried the effect of a short sea voyage, with a view to a more extended trip to some milder climate, should the result prove satisfactory; but he returned home in such a feeble condition as to preclude any further exertion. After this he rapidly failed "till Sunday, May 12, 1811, when he calmly fell asleep." Mr. Buckminster preached his funeral sermon from Psalm xii. 1, on May 16, after which his body was interred in First Church (Cotton) tomb in the Chapel Burying Ground.

As a writer Mr. Emerson cultivated a more rounded and elaborate style than is common in these days. On this account the impatient modern reader is in danger of overlooking the real merit of his writings, which consists in a wonderful clearness and accuracy of statement. "As a clergyman he was greatly endeared to his society. His manner in the pulpit was graceful and dignified, though seldom impassioned." His sermons were remarkably chaste and regular in their structure, correct and harmonious in their style, seldom aiming at the more daring graces of rhetoric, but always clear and accurate, and to a great majority of hearers particularly acceptable."

The theological views of Mr. Emerson were similar to those of his immediate predecessors. He may have been even more liberal than most of his contemporaries. His writings do not clearly show how far his Unitarianism extended, but plainly dis-



close a decided lack of sympathy with Calvinism. His son, Ralph Waldo Emerson, writes as follows on this point:—

“My father inclined obviously to what is ethical and universal in Christianity; very little to the personal and historical. Indeed, what I found nearest approaching what would be called his creed is in a printed sermon ‘at the Ordination of Mr. Bedec, of Wilton, N. H.’ I think I observe in his writings, as in the writings of Unitarians down to a recent date, a studied reserve on the subject of the nature and offices of Jesus. They had not made up their own minds on it. It was a mystery to them, and they let it remain so.”

Though Mr. Emerson put a high estimate on the good opinion of his fellow-men, he was very far from improperly laboring to acquire it. Neither were his relations towards his fellow-ministers dictated by any regard for popular favor. His friendship was lasting, and his enmity short-lived.

The writer gathered the following as the fruits of a visit to the home of Ralph Waldo Emerson at Concord, May 3, 1881.

Of his father, Mr. Emerson said that he died when he was so young that his recollection of him is not very strong. He added: “My daughter there [Miss Ellen T. Emerson] can tell you much more about him than I can.”

From the family Bible it appeared that William Emerson married Ruth Haskins, daughter of John and Hannah (Upham) Haskins, in Rainsford Lane, Boston; that they had children, — Phœbe Rip-



ley, born at Harvard, Feb. 9, 1798, died Sept. 28, 1800; John Clarke, born Nov. 28, 1799, died April 26, 1807; William, born in Summer Street, Boston, July 3, 1801; Ralph Waldo, born May 25, 1803; Edward Bliss, born April 17, 1805, died at St. Johns, Porto Rico, Oct. 11, 1834; Robert Bulkeley, born April 11, 1807, died in Littleton, Mass., May 23, 1859; Charles Chauncy, born Nov. 27, 1808, died May 9, 1836, at New York; Mary Caroline, born Feb. 26, 1811, died April 30, 1814. Ruth Emerson, his widow, died Nov. 6, 1811, at Concord.

Family letters and documents yield much additional matter, confirmatory of the faithful and conscientious manner in which Mr. Emerson was accustomed to perform the varied duties of his calling. It was his habit, it seems, to write out all his prayers (three for each service) with great minuteness, using for that purpose texts from the Bible. In this way he had collected volumes of written prayers, preserved with as much care as those containing his sermons. He was at pains, also, to keep a record of all the presents received from members of the society, appraising each one at a proper valuation. His letters to his wife and family abundantly indicate that he was equally faithful in his domestic concerns,

It is characteristic of him that, although very fond of music, especially of playing on the bass-viol, he did not think it proper to continue the indulgence after he had become a settled minister. His taste in this direction secured an invitation from Dr. Bel-



knap to assist him in arranging some of the hymns for his well-known collection.

Although naturally inclined to a serious way of looking at things, there were times when he lightened in tone. For instance, when his health began to fail him, some one wrote to him, anxiously, to take care of the east-wind. "East-wind," was his reply; "when I was a boy I heard more from my mother about east-winds than I have ever experienced since."

Mr. Emerson had much more than his share of personal attractions. He "was a handsome man," writes Dr. Charles Lowell, "rather tall, with a fair complexion, his cheeks slightly tinted, his motions easy, graceful, and gentlemanlike, his manners bland and pleasant. He was an honest man, and expressed himself decidedly and emphatically, but never bluntly or vulgarly. He had the organ of order very fully developed; he was one of those who have 'a place for everything, and everything in its place.' In that respect he differed from that admirable man, who was his classmate and friend, and my friend, — and one whom any one might feel proud to call his friend, — John Thornton Kirkland, who never had anything in order, but always found what was wanted; whose manuscript sermons in the pulpit were in separate pieces, but he always found the right piece, and that was better than almost any of his brethren could have found in what they had written with twice the labour."





W. Emerson.

My recollection of
him is a very ready
talker, with his friends
This looks to me not
so active as he.

May 3, 1881.

R. Walden Emerson



Besides numerous sermons on various public occasions, and several discourses in the Christian Monitor, Emerson wrote and delivered the Fourth of July oration in 1802. The "History of First Church in Boston" was published posthumously in 1812.

The following character of Rev. Mr. Emerson is extracted from Rev. J. S. Buckminster's sermon at his funeral:—

" 'Help, Lord, for the godly man ceaseth; for the faithful fail from among the children of men!'—*Psalm* xii. 1.

" *The godly man ceaseth.* The Reverend William Emerson gave early indications of devotedness to the service of God. He was a descendant of pious ancestors through many generations; and the only son of one of the most popular and promising ministers of Newengland, who died early in the american revolution. The mother, who survives to mourn over the death of her son, saw him with delight soon giving his attention and studies to the word and ministry of that God to whom the prayers and wishes of his parents had directed his first thoughts. They who knew him best during the most trying period of youthful virtue bear witness to the singular purity of his mind, tenderness of his conscience, devoutness of his feelings, and strictness of his manners; qualities which, by God's blessing, age and experience did not diminish, and which his christian profession afterwards secured and improved.

" In one of the longest conversations which I was permitted to hold with him, a few days before his death, when his mind seemed to be lighted up anew, and his faculties to collect fresh vigour, he expressed the most grateful and pious satisfaction in the circumstance that he, with all his father's family, had so early felt the obligations of the gospel as to give themselves up to Jesus Christ by a profes-



sion of his religion. The privilege of being a christian then occupied his thoughts; and he continued to talk with unusual animation of the benefits of early communion; and to express his wishes that his eldest son, then at his bedside, might not forget early to seek, nor be so unhappy as ever to forfeit, this christian privilege. That great article of the christian dispensation, the resurrection from the dead, was the frequent theme of his meditations and of his publick instructions; so that his faith was not vain, nor his preaching vain; for his faith was always strong enough to render his preaching the expression of his own intimate persuasions, and the cheerful employment of his life.

“Of the practical strength of his faith and piety he was permitted to give us a memorable example during that sudden attack which he sustained, a few years since, in all the fulness of his health and expectations, when he was busily preparing for a publick service. Those who then saw him brought down in an instant, and without any previous warning, to the gates of death, can never forget the steadfastness with which he received the alarm, and the singular humility and composure with which he waited during many days, doubtful of life, and expecting every hour to leave all that was dear to him on earth to present himself before God. Next to the satisfaction of behaving well ourselves in an hour of trial is that of witnessing the tranquillity of our friends, and finding that we need not fear for their example while flesh and heart is failing, for God is the strength of their heart and their portion forever.

“The same steadfastness and tranquil foresight of his dissolution God has enabled him to exhibit through the whole of the distressing and lingering disorder, of which he died. A few hours before his death he overheard some conversation respecting those who should pass the night with him; and he summoned strength enough to articulate, ‘God is with me!’ The great interest with which some



persons always watch the last intelligent exercises of a spirit which has been warned of its departure was here not disappointed. No one could leave his presence without a secret consciousness that the collected, intelligent, and strong indications which he daily gave of profound submission to God's will, and unshaken faith in his gospel, were very much to be preferred to the indistinct raptures and ejaculations which are so often caught from the lips of the dying, where more is supposed to be meant than meets the ear, and more is put into the speech than was originally contained in the thought. The approach of death gave no new colour to his faith; and he has left us a proof which will long be remembered, not of the truth indeed, but of the power of those principles by which, for nearly twenty years, he had preached and practised.

“He was a *faithful* as well as a pious man. Of his fidelity in his ministerial office you, my hearers, are of course better judges than the preacher. But from his extraordinary correctness of manners, and disposition to method in the disposal of his time, great fidelity might be expected in what he regarded as his duty; and this sentiment, as well as the desire of doing good, would engage so careful a mind as his in the punctilious discharge of the duties of his profession. The prosperity of this ancient church was peculiarly dear to him. He looked back with veneration almost unbounded on some of his predecessors here; and while he breathed much of their spirit he successfully emulated their merits. He was a happy example of that correct and rational style of evangelical preaching of which the yet lamented Clarke has left so fair a specimen. Our departed brother had long been employed on a history of the First Church; and was engaged in the analysis of the works and character of Chauncy when his progress was arrested by the disease of which he died; and he was called to join the company of those great and good men whom he had before known only in their works, but now face to face.



"Such is the constitution of society among us that much of the care of our literary and charitable institutions devolves upon those clergymen who have disposition and qualifications for the task. Mr. Emerson's industry, integrity, accuracy, and fidelity were well known in the numerous societies of which he was a member. The town has lost a diligent observer of its youth and their education; the Academy and Historical Society an associate greatly interested in their flourishing state; the University an attentive overseer. The clergy throughout the country have lost a hospitable and liberal brother; his family a most careful and excellent father, husband, and master; and his friends an honourable and faithful friend.

" 'O, 'tis well
With him. But who knows what the coming hour,
Veil'd in thick darkness, brings for us ?' "

In 1803 the church presented a petition to the General Court, through Senator John Q. Adams, a member of the society, asking them to modify the law restricting the taxing of pews in Boston to a sum not exceeding two shillings per week on the highest pew, so as to enable a legal tax to be raised on all the pews sufficient to cover parochial expenses. As a result of the application the law was changed the same year to meet the requirements.

The last case of church discipline which the record mentions occurred in 1804, when "the deacons of the church were appointed a committee to wait on and seriously admonish a member to return to his duty of public attendance on the ordinances of the gospel." At the same meeting, "on motion of Brother Deacon Morrill, it was voted that all such persons as, hav-



ing been previously members of other churches, manifest a desire to become members of our body, shall be proposed to the church by the pastor, and observe the same form of admission as new candidates."

In 1807 a portion of the Summer Street property was sold for the sum of three thousand dollars for the purpose of opening a court forty feet wide, on the easterly side of the society's land adjoining the land of Commodore Preble.

At the annual meeting of the proprietors on July 14, 1807, it was decided to sell the Old Brick Meeting-House, and erect a new meeting-house and four brick dwelling-houses on Summer Street, under the direction of a committee to be appointed for the purpose, and according to the terms and conditions which they shall see fit to impose. It was then voted that a committee of seven be appointed, with full powers to carry out the purposes of the foregoing vote. The committee was then chosen, and consisted of the following, namely: Messrs. David Tilden, James Morrill, Peter C. Brooks, John Joy, Charles Paine, George Blanchard, and Samuel Torrey.

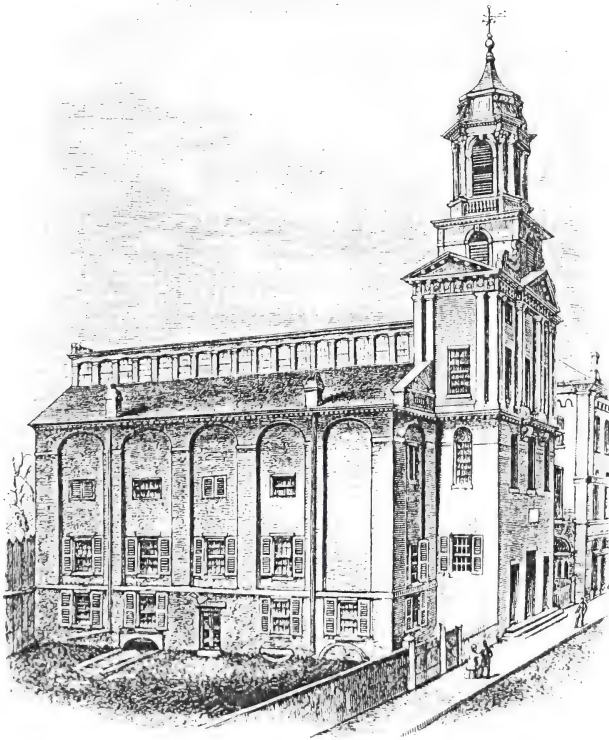
The Building Committee held a meeting at the Old Brick Meeting-House Wednesday, Dec. 16, 1807, and decided to "adhere to the plan and contract made with Mr. Benjamin Joy," and to appoint Mr. Asher Benjamin as inspector and superintendent of the building operations.



The terms of the contract with Mr. Joy, above alluded to, provided for a conveyance of the old meeting-house property and the payment of \$13,500 in addition, in consideration of his promise to erect a new meeting-house and four brick dwelling-houses on the land in Summer Street belonging to First Church, in accordance with certain stipulated plans and specifications.

The task of erecting the new meeting-house and dwelling-houses seems to have been performed with less delay and friction than usually attend such operations. Some difference of opinion is almost sure to arise where parties are obliged to agree upon the meaning of general or doubtful stipulations in contracts and specifications. But with the exception of one or two cases of slight disagreement,—for instance, as to the slating of the cupola, the gilding of a weather-cock, and the insertion of some refuse bricks, all of which appear to have been satisfactorily explained and adjusted,—the building of Chauncy Place meeting-house proceeded very smoothly. “As the temple in Jerusalem ‘got itself builded,’ to use the favorite phrase of the day, without noise of workmen’s tools, so somehow the house of worship in Chauncy Place rose without much calling of meetings or passing of votes. Mr. Benjamin seems to have been told to look after things; and he did. Church and congregation combined covered only some seven pages of the record with their action,”—the latter body “suggesting a steeple, should the





FOURTH HOUSE OF WORSHIP.

CHAUNCY PLACE.

1808.



foundation of the tower already laid seem to admit of it; adding a word about the ground to be left in front of the houses on Summer Street; but for the rest leaving everything to Mr. Joy and Mr. Benjamin.”¹

At a meeting of the church on Feb. 16, 1807, at which only nine members were present besides the pastor, it was voted to approve of the doings of the society in relation to the sale of the strip of land for the opening of Chauncy Place, and to instruct the deacons to advise with the committee appointed by the society to sell the property, or with any committee elected “for the purpose of carrying into effect the projected alterations in said tract of land, and of erecting such buildings and making such arrangements” as the society may deem expedient.

At a subsequent meeting on Sept. 7, 1807, at which only seven members were present besides the pastor, the church gave the deacons authority to alienate the Old Brick Meeting-House.

The Boston Chronicle contains the following notices of the removal:—

*“Thursday, July 21, 1808. — The Weekly Thursday Lecture will, we understand, be held this Day at the new meeting house in Summer Street, when an occasional discourse will be delivered by Rev. Mr. Emerson.”*² The Dedication services will commence at 11 o’clock, A. M.”

¹ Appendix to “The Last Sermon preached in First Church, Chauncy Street,” by Rufus Ellis (1868).

² Corporation Records, Vol. I. 3.



"*Monday, July 25, 1808.* — On Thursday last the workmen commenced razing that ancient edifice, the old Brick Meeting House. The same day (Thursday) the new Meeting House of the First Church in this town, erected in Summer Street, was solemnly dedicated. The introductory prayer was made by the Rev. Mr. Buckminster; the dedicatory prayer by the Rev. Dr. Elliot; the sermon by the Rev. Mr. Emerson, pastor of the church, from Exodus xxxiii. 14; and the concluding prayer by the Rev. Dr. Lathrop. The service closed with an anthem."

This last issue of the Chronicle also contains various laments in prose and verse at the destruction of the old edifice: —

"Alas! Old Brick, you're left in the lurch,
You bought the Pastor and sold the Church."

"After the demolition of the old Brick, there is scarcely a vestige of antiquity in the town. We hope Old South will maintain its original ground. Even the British troops, though they attacked other places of worship, never dared meddle with the Old Brick, — for Chauncy was there."

A poem follows, entitled "The Farewell Prayer of the Old Brick Church to her True Worshippers."

In the next issue (July 28) there is "A mournful address from the Old Brick Church to the Church in Brattle Street." And finally in that of August 18 appeared "The Old Brick Bell's farewell to the Churches in Boston."

Few persons are now living who can recall with any exactness the appearance of the Old Brick Meeting-House, either inside or out. The most



complete description of the ancient edifice comes from Dr. Edward Reynolds, who was actively connected with First Church for many years. In an "interview," which the writer was privileged to have with him on Jan. 13, 1881, the Doctor, then in his eighty-eighth year, said : —

"I was a member of First Church, and my father before me. I was baptized by Dr. John Clarke. While the Old Brick stood, that was my usual place of worship. At one time I sang in the choir at the Old Brick. We sat in the gallery, facing the pulpit. Our captain, as we called him, was named Carpenter. I have the most distinct recollection of the building inside and out. The most noticeable feature of the interior was the stove, with its long funnel running from the corner near State Street to the rear of the building where the hotel now stands. I remember Mr. Emerson very well. On one occasion he had read the service, and was about to proceed with the sermon, when he discovered that his manuscript had been mislaid. He told the congregation that he should be unwilling to pain them by preaching without notes; and to the secret delight, I am afraid, of the younger portion of his audience the services closed by singing of a hymn. The pulpit was very large and handsome, — we see nothing like it to-day, — and was approached by spiral stairways on each side. A gallery ran round three sides of the church, and had a clock on it, directly opposite the pulpit. This part of the house was occupied by the nicer class of domestics, as was the case for some years after the removal to Chauncy Place. The main entrance to the building was on Washington Street, just as it is to-day; and the pulpit stood directly opposite. Part of the old wall must be still standing. After the removal to Chauncy Place — a change which many persons at the time regretted — I attended



services for quite a number of years under Dr. Frothingham, a classmate of mine both at the Latin School and in Harvard College, and always my intimate friend and associate through life."

The day before Christmas, 1880, the writer called upon the venerable widow of the late Dr. Jacob Bigelow, then nearly ninety. Though not a member of First Church at any period, she was able to give me a distinct and accurate description of the old building:—

"You know," she said, "that was the church where they always had Thursday Lecture. Everybody went to it in those days. My father attended Dr. Eckley's [Old South] Church. He died in 1809; and then our family occupied a pew with the family of William S. Shaw in Federal Street Church.

"The Old Brick Meeting-House stood just where Joy's Building stands to-day, only it did not cover quite so much ground. There was a passage-way running completely round-it, just as it is to-day. It was built of brick, but not of the kind (red brick) they use now. The inside was square and very plain, the walls and ceilings being painted white. There was a broad alley up the middle, and two side alleys. On each side of the middle alley were double rows of pews. There were also wall pews, consisting of a row on each side of the pulpit, and one on the right and left of the church as you entered. They had cushions in them, but otherwise very plain, and, as I remember, without any ornamentation whatsoever. The pulpit was square, — that of the Old South was tub-like, — with the usual sounding-board, and was approached by a stairway on each side. There was a gallery running all the way round. The singers sat there, in the front pew, facing



the pulpit. They had no organ as I remember. The general appearance of the church was plainer even than that of Chauncy Place."

Mrs. Mary Anna Woodward, eighty-six years old on March 6, 1881, who in her younger days (until about 1828) was a resident of Dorchester, Mass., writes from Palmyra, N. Y., Feb. 20, 1881, as follows: —

"I was never in the Old Brick Church but once, and that was to attend the Thursday Lecture. Of course, I can give no detailed description of the old church; but the Governor's pew — so they called it — attracted my attention, being near where I sat. It was a large double-sized pew, raised above the rest about two feet, with a canopy which was surrounded by chintz hangings, festooned and trimmed with fringe. There were no long curtains attached. Faded and time-worn, it still plainly showed what it had been in its day. The old church, or at least the walls, had not been disturbed when I visited 'Dow's Long Room,' which occupied the passage through in 1812. This was the cheap store of Boston, where, among other articles, they had a great show of 'indispensables,' then called 'reticules.' This shop had a counter running the whole length on one side, where salesmen were stationed. You entered the narrow passage at one end of the church, made your purchase, and passed out at the other end. Dow's shop was a part of the old church, and the doors, which we passed through on entering and leaving the Long Room, belonged to the church. It was a cheap affair, but patronized by the very best class of customers."

Mr. William Hayden, for a long time chairman of the Standing Committee of First Church, wrote as follows of the Old Brick at the time of the removal from Chauncy Place: —

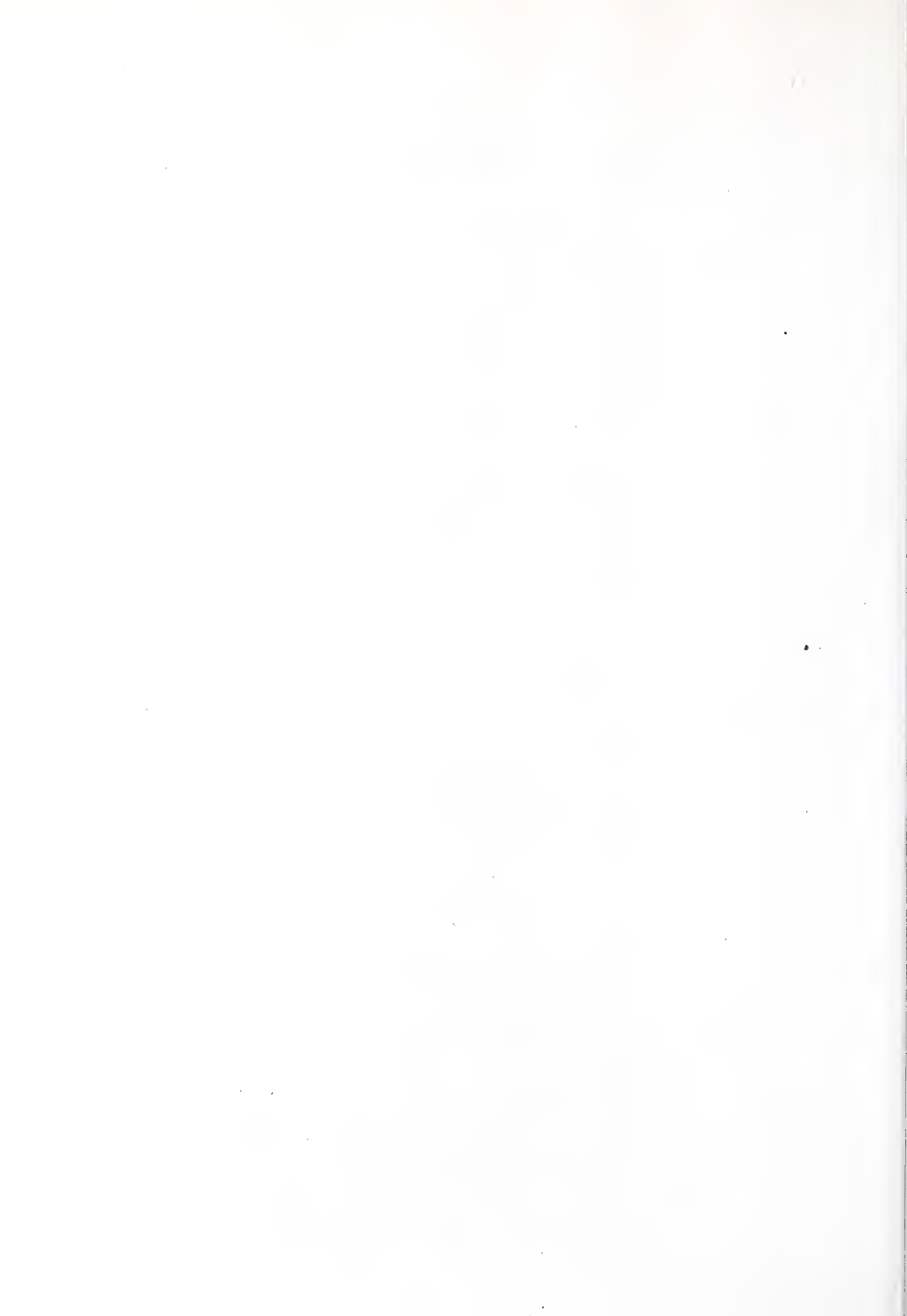


"I remember the old church, then familiarly known as the Old Brick, which occupied the present position of Joy's Building on Cornhill Square. I attended church there, in company with my parents, from 1800 up to 1808, when it was taken down; and its external and internal structure are well remembered, even to the pew which we occupied. The noise and dust of the great thoroughfare — now Washington Street, then Cornhill — were even then so great as to render the location unsuitable as a place of worship, and the project of removal to Summer Street was agitated. The change, though determined upon by the majority, was vehemently opposed by some of the worshippers, and, among others, by the Hon. Benjamin Austin, a well-known political leader of the Democratic party, and editor of the Chronicle, the Democratic organ of those days. He was the father of Charles Austin, who was killed by Selfridge, in State Street, in 1806. Mr. Austin's opposition to the removal of the church extended so far as to lead him to terminate his connection with it, and I think he never attended at Chauncy Place. He wrote some verses bewailing the fate of the old church, of which the first two lines are all that I remember, running thus: —

"Fa'rewell, Old Brick, — Old Brick, farewell;
You bought your minister and sold your bell."

The taxes upon the pews in the new meeting-house in Chauncy Place ranged from twelve to twenty-four cents per week, the whole amount being \$36.63. Out of one hundred and thirty-four pews, one hundred and fourteen were owned and occupied at the opening of the new house. The Theological Library was placed in the vestry. The parsonage was on the corner of Summer Street and Chauncy Place.

After the death of Emerson, which occurred less



than three years after the removal from Cornhill, the society remained for nearly two years without any settled minister.

John Lovejoy Abbot, of Andover, was then invited to preach as a candidate for the five Sundays in May, 1813. During that month he was unanimously elected pastor of First Church by vote of the society. This choice was confirmed by the vote of the brethren on May 23, which gave John L. Abbot fifty-six votes, Joseph McKean ten, and Francis Parkman seven. He was ordained July 14, 1813. "Introductory prayer by Rev. Mr. Thacher; Sermon by Rev. Professor Ware; Consecrating prayer by Rev. Dr. Lathrop; Charge by Rev. President Kirkland; Fellowship of the Churches by Rev. Charles Lowell; Concluding prayer by Rev. Mr. Parker, of Portsmouth. The members composing the Ecclesiastical Council, with the professors, tutors, and residents of Harvard University, also the Episcopal clergy and Baptist ministers of the town, with all the clergy of the Boston association, with a large number of invited guests, and the proprietors of pews in First Church, dined at Concert Hall. The whole was conducted with decency and in order.

"SAM BRADFORD, *Clerk*."

The ministry of Mr. Abbot was of short duration. He had scarcely entered upon his duties when the state of his health obliged him to desist.



LIFE OF ABBOT.

John Lovejoy Abbot, eldest son of John Lovejoy and Phœbe Abbot, was born in Andover, Mass., Nov. 29, 1783. His father, who was a farmer, was desirous that his son should pursue the same calling, but did not press his wishes when he saw that his mind was bent on securing a liberal education. After a preparatory course at Phillips Academy, Andover, he entered Harvard College at the age of seventeen, and graduated with honor in 1805. He then returned home, and became a student of theology under Rev. Jonathan French, who at that time preached for the society of which his parents were members. Soon afterwards he obtained an appointment as proctor at Harvard, in order to pursue his studies under Dr. Ware, the successor of Dr. Tappan, as professor of theology at Cambridge. In 1807 Mr. Abbot was appointed reader in the Episcopal church in Cambridge, and held the office for a year. He was made librarian of the College in 1811, and continued in that capacity for two years. Meanwhile he had been licensed to preach in 1808, and had frequently supplied vacant pulpits in the neighborhood.

After accepting the call of First Church to become the successor of Mr. Emerson, in 1813, he was married, October 24, to Elizabeth Bell, daughter of Thomas and Elizabeth (Bell) Warland, of Cambridge. He preached a few Sundays only



after his ordination, when a wasting consumption obliged him to cease from labors which were never afterwards resumed. His request for a temporary relaxation from work met with a ready response from the society. The following votes were immediately and unanimously passed : —

“Oct. 17, 1813. A letter was communicated from Rev. Mr. Abbot respecting the ill state of his health: Whereupon

“Voted, unanimously, That this Church and Congregation are deeply afflicted, and sincerely regret the indisposition and ill state of health of their revered and beloved Pastor; and they recommend that he comply with the advice of his physicians with respect to a contemplated voyage or journey.

“Voted, That the Standing Committee be requested to inform the Rev. Pastor of the above vote, and to aid him in suitable arrangements for the same.

“Voted, That the expenses of supplying the pulpit be paid by the Society during the absence of the Rev. Mr. Abbot, and that his salary be continued.”

Besides a copy of these votes, the following letter was sent to Mr. Abbot : —

Boston, Oct. 18, 1813.

REV. JOHN L. ABBOT.

DEAR SIR, — Your letter of the 17th inst., communicated to the First Church and Society, was presented yesterday, and by them received with the most sincere sentiments of respect, sympathy, and affection; and whilst they bow with submission to the Providence of God in his dispensation which is about to separate the Pastor from his flock, we hope, with the blessing of God, for the recovery and establishment of your health, and that we may



have mutual cause to sing of mercy and of judgment. We enclose a copy of the Votes of the Society, and in behalf of the Standing Committee are, Rev. and dear Sir, with sentiments of esteem and respect,

Your friends and obedient servants,

DAVID TILDEN, }
JAMES MORRILL, } *Deacons.*

Mr. Abbot sailed from New Bedford for Portugal Nov. 29, 1813, and after six months' absence reached home June 10, 1814. The return voyage was so long and rough as to deprive him of any benefit from his foreign travels; and finding himself unable to resume preaching, he went to Brighton to spend the summer.

After a long and painful struggle he gradually came to realize that it was hopeless to think of resuming his labors, and early in October seriously reflected on resigning his charge. During that month he spent a few days in the family of Peter C. Brooks at Medford. He next visited his home in Andover, driving most of the way himself in a chaise from Brighton (a distance of twenty miles), and arrived at his destination in cheerful spirits. He seemed to be equally well the following day until evening, when his condition was such as to cause the greatest alarm. From this time he gradually declined until early in the morning of Oct. 17, 1814, when he quietly breathed his last. In accordance with the request of his parishioners he was buried from Chauncy Place meeting-house, the sermon being preached by Edward Everett, then



pastor of the church in Brattle Square. The discourse delivered on this occasion, together with a monody to his memory by J. Lathrop, Jr., were published. He was buried at Andover, Mass.

As a preacher Mr. Abbot had very little opportunity to exercise his gifts. While studying for the ministry at Cambridge he preached several sermons before a religious society of which he was a member. These were generally of a "serious and practical nature," avoiding topics which would lead to controversy. But on one occasion at least, in a sermon before the Theological Society in Cambridge, delivered April 26, 1809, he departed from this rule, selecting for his subject the "Worship of Christ," and enforcing the negative side of the argument. It would appear from this that his views had changed in some respects since he was appointed reader in the Episcopal church in Cambridge. Of the particular type of Unitarianism which he favored nothing more definite can be stated than that his views are said to have been "in substantial accordance with those of Dr. Channing *at that period.*" As a pastor, the ties in which he was bound to his society during his brief ministry were very strong.

Mr. Abbot died without issue. His widow married Dr. Manning, of Cambridge, and died March 4, 1880, at the age of ninety-four years and eight months.

In the twenty-nine years ending with 1814, two hundred and fifteen persons signed the covenant.



During the same space the number of baptisms was five hundred and eighty-two, of which two hundred and ninety-nine were males, and two hundred and seventy-eight females, besides five whose sex is unknown.¹

It appears that the version of the Psalms called Tate and Brady was used by the church until superseded, probably, by Rev. William Emerson's collection. In 1808 the pastor published "A Selection of Psalms and Hymns, embracing all the Varieties of Subject and Metre suitable for Private Devotion and the Worship of Churches." It does not appear from the records whether this book was used in the service of the church. It would seem strange if such were not the case, however; for apart from the consideration due to the author, the work commends itself as one prepared with great care and discrimination. In his preface Mr. Emerson says: "Lastly, prefixing to each psalm and hymn the name of a tune well composed and judiciously chosen, is an evident and valuable auxiliary to musical bands, and conduces to the perfection of sacred harmony. *No American hymn-book has hitherto offered this aid to the performers of psalmody.*"

The book of "Hymns for the Christian Church," now in use, comprises some two hundred and fifty selections from the "Psalter," while the remainder were gathered from other sources by the pastor.

¹ "Five children of Richard and Venus Dodge, blacks," A. D. 1809.



CHAPTER VII.

1815-1849.

NATHANIEL LANGDON FROTHINGHAM.

Disappointments in the Parish. — The Death of Mr. Emerson and of Mr. Abbot. — The New Building not Satisfactory, and the Removal complained of by Many. — Call of Mr. Frothingham. — Sketch of his Life and Character. — His Return to his Pulpit, and his Last Words on several Occasions there and elsewhere. — His Blindness. — His Rare Scholarship. — His Hymns. — Many Tributes to his Gifts as a Man of Letters, and to his Constancy as a Preacher and Pastor. — Funeral Services. — Resolutions of the Church. — Memoir by Dr. Hedge. — The Ministry of Dr. Frothingham. — The Unitarian Controversy, and his Comparative Indifference to it. — Exciting Topics. — Real Estate of the Church. — The Music. — Half Way Covenant Dispensed with. — Sunday School. — Congregation Incorporated. — Two Hundredth Anniversary. — Transcendentalism. — The Minister's Relation to it. — Christian Psalter. — Meeting-House Reconstructed. — Resignation of Dr. Frothingham, and Church Action thereon. — Baptisms and Admissions to the Church.

THE society had seen many distracting changes during the few years that had elapsed since they ceased to worship in the Old Brick. There was the removal from Cornhill, to many persons a source of deep regret; then the loss of Mr. Emerson in the very fulness of his powers; and finally, after a vacancy of nearly two years, the short and intermittent ministry of Mr. Abbot. A better day, however,

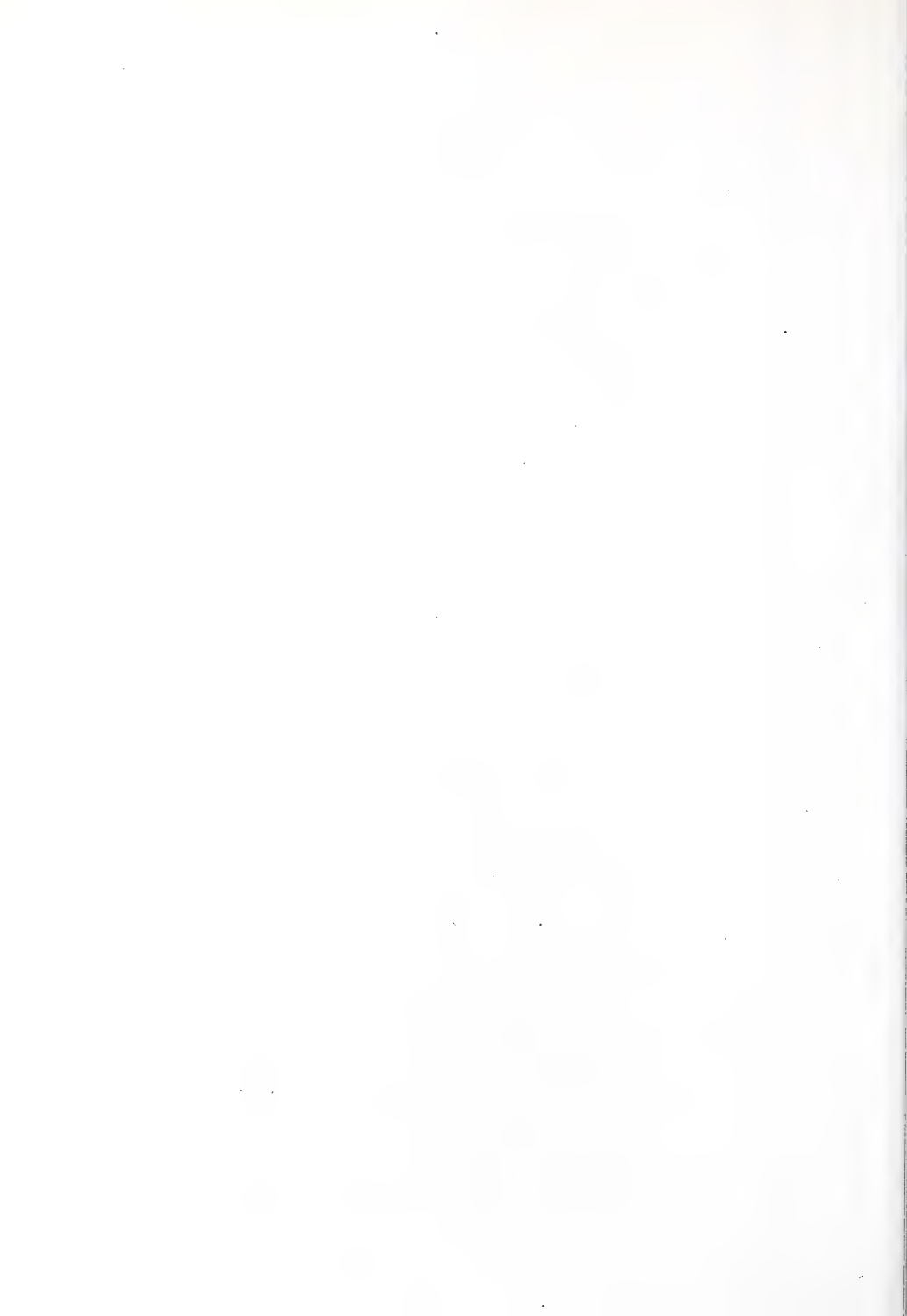


was at hand. The society soon made choice of one who was to remain their minister for an extended period.

Shortly after the death of Mr. Abbot, Mr. Nathaniel Langdon Frothingham received a unanimous call to fill the pulpit. The date of his election is Feb. 26, 1815, and seems to have been the immediate result of an invitation extended to him in December, 1814, to preach four Sundays "in January next."¹ His letter of acceptance was read after afternoon service, February 12, by Dr. Lowell. His ordination took place March 15, 1815. Professor Ware offered the introductory prayer; sermon, by Rev. Joseph McKean; consecrating prayer, by Rev. William E. Channing; charge, by Rev. John Lathrop; fellowship of the churches, by Rev. S. C. Thacher; concluding prayer, by Rev. Francis Parkman. The council, clergy, and others dined, after the exercises, at Concert Hall.

We note a transition from ancient to modern usage in the issue of special cards of invitation to the ceremony of ordination. Instead of a general participation in that observance, as was the custom when Church and State were blended, the growth of population and increase in the number of churches of other denominations had combined to diminish its glory as a public occasion, and to give to the ceremony more of the nature of an assembly of those who were in special sympathy with it.

¹ Corporation Records, Vol. I. 16.



THE COMMITTEE of the FIRST CHURCH AND SOCIETY in BOSTON request the favour of your company at the

ORDINATION

OF

MR. N. L. FROTHINGHAM,

ON WEDNESDAY, the 15th inst.

The Services will commence at 11 o'clock, A. M. After the Solemnities of the Day, your company is requested, to dine with the COMMITTEE, at CONCERT-HALL.

JAMES MORRILL, }
WILLIAM SMITH, } Committee.

Boston, March 6, 1815.

ADMIT

To the dinner provided for the REV. CONGREGATIONAL CLERGY, at Concert Hall, on
THURSDAY, 1st June.

JAMES MORRILL, }
BENJAMIN WELD, } Committee
THOMAS K. JONES. }

Dinner on Table at 2 o'clock.



LIFE OF FROTHINGHAM.

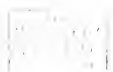
Nathaniel Langdon, son of Ebenezer and Joanna (Langdon) Frothingham, was born in Boston, July 23, 1793. In early boyhood he showed scholarly tastes and unusual intellectual promise. He entered the Boston Public Latin School in 1803 with Edward Everett, Charles P. Curtis, William T. Andrews, and Edward Reynolds. After pursuing the regular course at that institution in a highly creditable manner he was admitted to Harvard College in 1807 at the age of fourteen. His college life is thus described by his classmate and friend, Rev. Dr. Allen, of Northborough:—

“Dr. Frothingham was one of my most intimate friends in college, and our intimacy and friendship lasted through life. He was one of the younger members of the class; and although from the first a diligent student and a good scholar, it was not, I think, till his third year that he gained a high rank among his fellow-students. But at the close of his college course he was surpassed by very few; and as a reward of distinguished merit an English Oration—out of the usual course—was assigned him for Commencement. He was an elegant classical scholar, a fine writer in prose and verse; and in elocution he was surpassed by none of his classmates, not excepting Edward Everett. He was a great favorite—almost a pet—of Dr. McKean, the Professor of Rhetoric, who seemed to regard him as a model orator. Through his college life he maintained an irreproachable character, and was highly esteemed by his classmates, who, without jealousy or envy, watched his progress, and were proud of his fame.”





N. L. Frothingham.





After graduating in 1811, and serving as usher in the Boston Latin School until May, 1812, he accepted the appointment of preceptor of rhetoric and oratory at Harvard, an office for which his fine tastes and large acquirements in that department eminently fitted him, although then only nineteen years of age. His duties in this capacity were not exacting, and did not interfere with the pursuit of those studies which were to fit him for a more devoted calling. He received the degree of A. M. in course in 1814, and his connection with the College ceased with the call to First Church in 1815.

The first entries on his "Ministerial Record" are as follows:—

"Jan. 23, 1815. By an unanimous vote of the members of First Church of Christ, in Boston, I was invited to become their pastor.

"Jan. 26. By an unanimous vote of the Brethren of the First Church and Congregation I was chosen for their pastor.

"Feb. 12. My answer accepting the charge, to which the preceding votes had called me, was read by the Rev. Mr. Lowell to the First Church and Congregation.

"Eleven weeks elapsed between my invitation to preach at Chauncy Place and my call to settle there. During this time I supplied the desk and preached in that church sixteen discourses. In the interval between my invitation and my ordination I supplied the pulpit by exchange."

In 1818 Dr. Frothingham married Ann Gorham Brooks, sister of the late Peter C. Brooks, who, like



his distinguished father of the same name, was a lifelong and honored member of First Church. His wife was also a sister of Mrs. Edward Everett and Mrs. Charles Francis Adams, the latter of whom is the sole survivor of her generation. After a long and singularly devoted ministry, relieved in the earlier part by a year of foreign travel, Dr. Frothingham, finding his bodily strength would no longer bear the strain, made a second visit to Europe in 1849. On his return the same year, with health still much impaired, he found it necessary to resign his charge. Though relieved of all ministerial responsibility, his connection with the society as a parishioner was never severed. His friendly advice was sought and given on all occasions, though he took part in the public services of the church in only one instance. The present minister thus recalls this memorable occasion: —

“Sunday morning, on the 22d of June, 1862, Dr. Frothingham came once more into his old pulpit, to the great satisfaction of his former parishioners. 1 Cor. vii. 29, 30, 31, supplied the text. ‘Time and Eternity’ was the subject. We measure life, in the body and out of the body, by what we do and bear, by what we endeavor and suffer and enjoy. ‘I see no clock,’ he said, ‘in that Divine House.’ The sermon was exquisitely tender, the language such as fell, according to my experience, from no other lips, — for, as I have often had occasion to say, there were words and phrases of this preacher and talker that have perished with him; to use one of the old ecclesiastical phrases, as there was a ‘Use of Sarum’ or of ‘Canterbury,’ so there was a ‘Use of the Minister of First Church



from 1814 to 1850" which was characteristic and peculiar. Dr. Frothingham by this time was almost blind; and his sermon was not read, though it was written upon paper, — a transcript, I suppose, of what had already been written upon the inner tablets; just as he would fasten the stanza of a German hymn in his mind, and carry it with him in his morning walk with his faithful companion, sure to bring it back in musical English verse. Dr. Frothingham, wonderful talker as he was, and rich in resources of learning and thought and imagination, would not trust himself to extemporaneous preaching. He once told me that he 'always dreaded to face an audience;' and he could not add to his discomfort the dread of falling into some crudity or slovenliness of speech, which, however, would have been least likely to have befallen him of all men. If he could have been persuaded to have burned his ships behind him, and put out to sea, I am sure that his preaching would have gained in popularity without losing any of its intrinsic value. It was over fine, sometimes, for daily use, and he was hindered by the manuscript behind which he tried to shelter himself. Many persons who have read his sermons since they heard them have been surprised to find how much they missed while they only listened. The sermon of which I am writing was all the more effective because the preacher was compelled, by his poor vision, to preach it. The minister's rare taste appeared, as during the years of his pastorate, in the hymns and the music. The sermon was repeated on the two Sundays following, first at West Church, and then at King's Chapel. Dr. Frothingham was all these years as faithful a parishioner as he had been minister; and, as all know, in this world of diversities of men's judgments, and changes in ways and means, it is not easy to pass gracefully from the pulpit to the pews, and resign your work to less skilled hands. Until disease had put his mind beyond his reach and control he had a wonderful faculty of keeping his own coun-



sel when he was unable, as he often must have been, to assent and sympathize. What he was to the minister during his earlier years in the neighborhood of street and city, and afterwards while this destined successor was at best a boy preacher, that he continued to be when, largely under his auspices and at his suggestion, he was called from Northampton to undertake the charge of the old church at a time of denominational transition and even controversy between new and old, and right wing and left wing. Although the new house of worship was for the old minister too much a 'cathedral,' and too little a 'meeting-house,' he was none the less ready to contribute a beautiful hymn for the service of laying the corner-stone.

"His last appearance in the pulpit was at the *impromptu* meeting in Hollis Street Church on the day of the assassination of President Lincoln. His remarkable prayer on that occasion will never be forgotten by those who heard it. Beautiful, fitting, and appropriate in itself, his blindness gave added pathos to his heartfelt devotion."

After his retirement from public life Dr. Frothingham devoted himself to literary tasks, producing at this late period some of his most finished performances. In 1852 he sent to press a volume entitled "Sermons in the Order of a Twelvemonth," "containing some of the best of his professional discourses, all of which breathe a lofty strain of Christian thought and sentiment," and are beautified by that singular grace of diction so characteristic of his writings. In 1855 appeared a volume of his poems under the title of "Metrical Pieces," which, in spite of their modest designation, places the author on the higher level of American poets.



In the spring of 1859, accompanied by his family, he made a third and final visit to Europe, returning, after an absence of a year and a half, in November, 1860. He had scarcely reached home when his eyesight, never perfect, began seriously to fail; and marked "symptoms of glaucoma," which had afflicted other members of his family, seemed to forebode an entire loss of vision. This unhappy condition was realized four years later, following close upon a sad bereavement which deprived him of his dearly cherished wife. The effect of a painful operation on his eyes, performed in the summer of 1864, instead of enlarging his feeble vision, as was hoped, hastened on the pending gloom, and finally left him for the last six years of his life in utter darkness.

But five at least of these "darkened years" were not devoid of intellectual vision. With the help of one who well performed the varied offices of secretary, friend, and nurse, he continued his labors, arranging his papers; dictating poems, translating German hymns, and composing material for a second volume of "Metrical Pieces," which, however, did not go through the press until the workman had become incapable of all interest in the work. His declining years were cheered and lightened by "troops of friends." Nothing was wanting which might help to relieve the burdens of old age. He enjoyed "the sound of familiar voices when familiar faces beamed on him in vain," and conversed "with unimpaired faculty and zest until nearly the last



year of his life." "In my frequent visits to him," writes Dr. Allen, "in the 'evil days' which came upon him after the external world was shut out from his sight, I always found him bright and cheerful, fond of recalling the scenes of our college life and the memory of departed classmates and friends, and thankful for the blessings that still remained." The same writer, alluding to "a prominent trait of Dr. Frothingham's character," says: "I have personal knowledge of his kindness and generosity, for I have been the almoner of his bounty; and I know that some — I believe that many — recall his acts of kindness and bless his memory." The last few months of his life were burdened with a load "which leaned too hardly on his weakened frame, and shut out every prospect but that of the great Beyond." He died on Monday, April 4, 1870. The following extract is taken from an obituary notice by the Rev. T. B. Fox, which appeared in the Boston Transcript on the same day: —

"Rev. Nathaniel Langdon Frothingham, D. D., died at his residence in Newbury Street, Monday morning, at two o'clock, receiving thus a blessed relief from a protracted and painful sickness. Though for several years he has been a sufferer in the seclusion of the sick-chamber, and out of the sight of all but a few friends and those who ministered to him with unwearied, filial devotion, he has not been out of the minds and the hearts of the many who highly esteemed and greatly loved him; and sincere sorrow will be mingled with the feeling that his departure was ordered in mercy.



quietly devoted to his professional duties, Dr. Frothingham's life was uneventful, for it was the life of the student and the man of letters. His learning was various and ample; and he was honored for his acquirements, as well as for the high order of his intellectual gifts. In so converse he was the coveted teacher and companion of our best thinkers and scholars. His interest and delightful literary pursuits continued unabated when others, suffering from infirmities and pains like his, would have abandoned their books and pens, and felt that even to listen to writing was a luxury to be given up. Whilst sickness prevented him to work, he was never idle.

Dr. Frothingham published several volumes of prose and poetry; and to the *Christian Examiner*, the *North American Review*, and several other periodicals, he frequently contributed articles of rare excellence, both as to their substance and their form. His style was singularly clear and rich, showing a finish and correctness in eloquent paragraphs and exquisite sentences quite unrivalled. His criticism and fastidiousness as a critic of the writings of others were severely applied to his own productions; and hence the polish, erudition, solid brilliancy, lofty sentiment, and thoughtfulness, which have put them among the best specimens of American literature.

Of Dr. Frothingham as a man it is hardly necessary to speak, in this community, to those of his own day and generation, or to those younger than himself, whose privilege it was to meet him and enjoy intercourse with him. Humorous, genial, hospitable, liberal in his conservatism, judicious in his judgments, free from all petty envies and jealousies, without ostentation, and scorning loud or mere professions, there was about him a winning charm that made his presence and his speech ever welcome to all."

The following resolutions were adopted as an expression of the general feeling of sorrow and sym-



pathy called forth among his old parishioners by his decease : —

Inasmuch as it has pleased Almighty God to take to himself, after an unusually protracted season of privation and extreme bodily suffering, their late beloved Pastor, Rev^d Nathaniel Langdon Frothingham, the Standing Committee of the First Church, feeling most desirous of putting on record an expression of their loving sense of his inestimable worth, and of their tender sympathy with him during the years of suffering in which he has been withdrawn from personal communion with most of them, do hereby

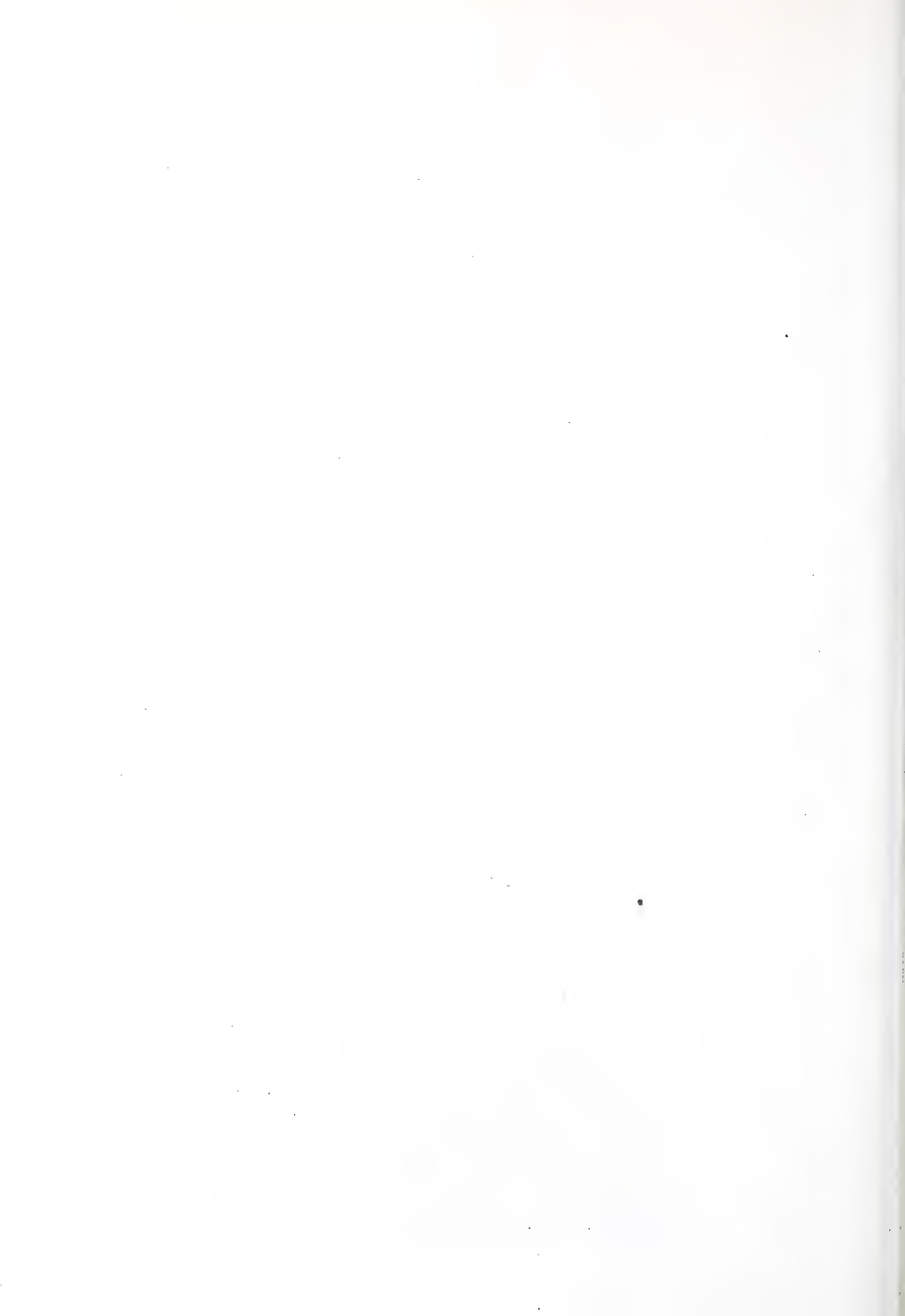
Resolve, That in the decease of Dr. Frothingham the Christian church in Boston has lost an able, earnest, and eloquent disciple.

Resolved, That as his immediate associates we deplore his loss as of an eminently social and genial companion, a kindly sympathetic friend and Christian teacher, but rejoice to find consolation in his own beautiful words, —

“ He ’s gone before, where pain is past,
Nor danger threatens, nor grief corrodes ;
And joy is full, and treasures last,
In those immortal ‘ many abodes.’ ”

Resolved, That during the long hours of irremediable pain and mysterious trial which have clouded the last years of our departed friend, the hearts of the congregation have been constantly turned in tender sympathy towards him, only too conscious of their inability to offer him any other alleviation.

Resolved, That by the decease of Dr. Frothingham the literary world has been deprived of “ a scholar, and a ripe and good one, exceeding wise, fair spoken, and persuading,” and a sacred poet, whose melodies will long preserve his memory among men.



Resolved, That we will attend the funeral services in honor of our departed friend at the First Church this afternoon.

Resolved, That these Resolutions be placed on the Records of the First Church, and that a copy be transmitted to the family of the deceased, with the assurances of our most affectionate sympathy in this hour of their great bereavement.

Signed,

N. THAYER, }
S. L. ABBOT, } *Committee.*
T. SARGENT, }

In a letter, dated April 3, 1870, and read from the pulpit to the church and congregation on the Sunday before his departure for Europe, the present pastor thus refers to the recent death of Dr. Frothingham:—

“I had written so far, and had reached, as I supposed, the end; but presently the word came to me that one, for more than thirty years your minister, after a long and exceedingly trying illness, had laid down the burden of age and infirmity and passed into the Light. Let me gratefully bear my testimony to many offices of love, my experiences of his genial and affectionate nature, from the time of my earliest manhood to the years when the pastor became a parishioner, upon whose loyalty in word and work I could always confidently rely. Many to whom he ministered in this congregation have passed on before him, but there are those who fondly recall his long day of service, and rejoice for him that years which had become labor and sorrow are ended. Taught beyond most in his chosen profession, he was a lover of all good learning, ancient and modern; a man of a reverent and trustful spirit, seeking the things which make for peace, not using the words, that came so apt from his lips, for criticism, but rather to discharge the debt of love.”



Funeral services were held in First Church on the following Wednesday (April 6). Selections from the Scriptures were read by Dr. Gannett; and Dr. George E. Ellis offered the prayer in the absence of the pastor, who was prevented by illness from attending the services. Dr. Hedge, the memorialist of Dr. Frothingham, also delivered a funeral address. He was buried in Burlington, Mass.

The Journal of the Massachusetts Historical Society (1869-70), of which Dr. Frothingham was a member, contains tributes to his memory by the president, the Hon. Robert C. Winthrop; and by the Rev. Dr. Walker.

In allusion to his pastoral labors Dr. Hedge says, in his memoir of Dr. Frothingham:—

“Of his success in this connection there are many witnesses. He attached to himself a strong and united parish, to which he ministered long enough to see one generation of worshippers pass and another take their place; long enough to teach the children of those whom as children he had taught and baptized. His ‘congregation at the First Church,’ says one of the notices that followed his death, ‘included a large number of scholars and writers, among whom were Edward Everett, William H. Prescott, George Bancroft, Joseph T. Buckingham, Henry T. Tuckerman, Charles Francis Adams, and Charles Sprague.’”

In his funeral sermon Dr. Hedge, referring to the same subject, says:—

“To the duties of that [pastoral] office he gave the strength and marrow of his life, suffering no literary avocation — though a lover of letters — to divert his thoughts

or disengage his affections from the work of the ministry, — subordinating all other tastes and pursuits to that supreme call."

"As a preacher," Dr. Hedge continues in the same discourse, "he could hardly be said to be popular. Excessive refinement, want of *rapproch* with the common mind, precluded those homely applications of practical truth which take the multitude. Nor did he feel sufficient interest in doctrinal theology to satisfy those who craved systematic instruction in that line. His reputation, therefore, was less extended than intense. The circle of his admirers was small; but those who composed it listened to him with enthusiastic delight. When, occasionally, he preached to us students at the University from the pulpit of the college chapel, there was no one, I think, to whom we listened with attention more profound, and, for myself I can say, with richer intellectual profit. The poetic beauty of his thought, the pointed aptness of his illustrations, the truth and sweetness of the sentiment, the singular and sometimes quaint selectness, with nothing inflated or declamatory in it, of the language, won my heart, and made him my favorite among the preachers of that day. I will not mispraise him when dead, whom, living, I could not flatter. I am well aware, and was even then aware, that the preaching of our friend did not satisfy the class of minds to which Channing, in his way, and Walker and Ware and Lowell so ably ministered in theirs; but preaching has other legitimate and important functions besides those of unfolding the philosophy of religion, or stimulating the moral sense. There are 'differences of gifts,' and there are 'diversities of operations;' but the same spirit goes with all earnest effort in the service of truth, and is justified in all."

His memorialist then alludes to what he justly esteems a most excellent work of Dr. Frothing-

ham. As coming from one so abundantly able to testify, the opinion, which is here quoted, has peculiar weight. He says:—

“One service Dr. Frothingham has rendered to the Church and the cause of religion, in which he is unsurpassed by any preacher of his connection, — perhaps I may say by any American preacher of his time. I speak of his hymns, which will live, I believe, — I am sure they deserve to live, — as long as any hymns in our collection. His musical tact, his intimate knowledge of the exigencies of vocalism, combining with his poetic faculty, have added, in those hymns of his, to devout aspiration and pure religious sentiment, the perfection of melody.”

“As a scholar,” says Dr. Hedge, “he had in his profession no superior, scarcely a rival. A learned theologian, familiar with the Latin and Greek classics, well versed in the modern languages and their literatures, — in richness and extent of intellectual culture he stood pre-eminent among his brethren.”

Few professional men have attained to such exquisite finish in their style of composition as Dr. Frothingham brought to all, even the most trifling subjects. He had a rare faculty of shaping his thoughts so as to “express with unerring fitness the thing most fit to be expressed.” In his own poetical productions, as well as in translations from German authors, this exquisite taste is displayed to the best advantage. “His best thoughts took on a poetical form, and could vent themselves in no other way.” “His versions from other tongues, and especially from the rich stores of German song, are acknowledged by competent judges to be the most success-



ful attempts in that kind." His original productions are, many of them, "such as the best esteemed poet in the land might be proud to own."¹

The late beloved minister of this church began his duties at a time of intense religious excitement. On all sides the forces were preparing for that struggle which ended in the partition of the Congregational body. The time to hold back from a dread of disturbing the peace of the churches had gone by.

"Non sunt orandi ista sed litigandi tempora."

Chauncy and Mayhew had prepared the way in a former century, but now the dawn of a new era saw young men taking up the calling of preachers with added enthusiasm and distinctively practical aims. Who can say what the result "might have been" had Buckminster, of Brattle Street Church, and Thatcher, of New South Church, lived to increase and expend their rich abundance! But both were cut off in early manhood. Buckminster died in 1812, when only twenty-eight years old, and Thatcher, his friend and memorialist, in 1818 at thirty-two.

Others were soon found, however, more ready and eager to advance the liberal cause. There had

¹ Dr. Frothingham left a large family of children, of which Octavius Brooks Frothingham, the distinguished preacher, lately of New York, and Miss Ellen Frothingham, an accomplished translator of German poetry, are members. The memoir, which has been so freely made use of in this account, may be found in Mass. Hist. Soc. Proceed., 1869-70, 371.



been frequent collisions on former occasions, but the year 1815 marks the time when the struggle was first fairly defined. Eloquent preachers and vigorous writers then engaged in open opposition to the old dogmas of Orthodoxy; the stricter portion of the Congregational body marshalled all its forces to repel the attack, and the controversy was fully opened. The special causes which brought about this result need not here be mentioned. The issue involved a departure from what the stricter party defined as the traditional faith of the fathers. To the broader party, on the other hand, which now became known under the distinctive name of Unitarian, the movement was simply a revival of the earlier theology as opposed to implicit adherence to the old dogmas of Calvinism.

By far the larger part of the Congregational churches in this neighborhood were in sympathy with the less rigid doctrines. Of those in the Boston of that day all save one, and that by no means a strong exception, were of the same mind. The same is true of many of the "first" churches in adjoining and distant towns. In these cases ministers, church members, and parishioners all yielded to the same influence. But in places where unanimity was not the rule, as in country parishes which, unlike Boston and some of the larger towns, had not been supplied with liberal preachers, divisions and law-suits were by no means uncommon in connection with the settlement of a new minister. Societies



were formed, not as in Boston, from new material, but out of the disaffected portions of the old.

In his twentieth anniversary sermon, preached to First Church, March 15, 1835, Dr. Frothingham briefly alludes to the "Unitarian Controversy." He shows that while First Church strongly sympathized with all that was put forward on the liberal side, they did not see fit to take an active part in the struggle. To use his own words, "We remained almost at rest in that earthquake of schism. If we were sometimes affected by the agitating topics of the time, it was not often. Our words have been of brotherly love and mutual consideration. We silently assumed the ground, or rather found ourselves standing upon it, that there was no warrant in the Scriptures for the idea of a threefold personality in the divine nature; or for that of atonement, according to the popular understanding of that word; or for that of man's total corruption and inability; or for that of an eternity of woe adjudged as the punishment of earthly offences; or indeed for any of the peculiar articles in that scheme of faith which went under the name of the Genevan reformer. We have worshipped only One, the Father. We have recognized the authority of Jesus Christ as a divine messenger. We have maintained the accountability of man, and a righteous retribution, and a life beyond this. But in all these points we were adopting rather practical principles, and a ground of edifying, than tenets to be discussed. We have never pre-



tended to understand all mysteries, nor to solve every question that a vain curiosity might propose. We have not sought to penetrate to what is beyond us; but have been content to leave many things in that sacred obscurity in which they are left by the written Word. And even upon subjects within the range of reasonable inquiry we have not favored a controversial tone. We have made more account of the religious sentiment than of theological opinions."

The sermon then proceeds to discuss the "practice of the Church," especially in regard to topics of general interest in the community, and those movements which will at intervals arise and assume a transient importance. "Has this practice," says the writer, "a stranger might inquire, been in any degree peculiar? It has, and steadily peculiar. We have been singularly conservative in our customs; mistrustful of innovations, jealous of our liberty, fond of peace, refusing to be influenced by any gustiness of the times. We have loved to dwell within ourselves, and disliked to implicate our concerns with those of other churches, or with any associations of men. We have supposed that the exclusive objects of our association were to worship our Maker according to our consciences, and to maintain the sacred decency of Christian order. We have therefore been unwilling to mix up these objects with plans of a different, however important nature. We have been unwilling to take the stand



of missionaries or propagandists in any shape. We have been unwilling to form ourselves into a Bible society, or a temperance, or an education, or a benevolent society; or to appear as anything else than what we are, — a church of Christ, an assembly for social worship.”

The new organ which was ordered to be made in England some time before, at last arrived in the ship *Restitution*, June 16, 1816; was received at the vestry the 19th, and was first used for public worship the 30th. The first committee on music had been chosen just a year before.

The years pass by without special interest.

In 1819 the church allowed a way to be made for foot passengers from Pond Street to Summer Street, through Chauncy Place.

The amount of real estate held by the church at this time is shown by the “First Financial Report” which appears on record. It mentions the brick meeting-house on Chauncy Place, a vacant lot of land adjoining the same, and four brick houses on Summer Street. The annual income derived from this property in 1821 amounted to only \$3,746, and the expenditures to \$2,682.20, leaving a balance of \$1,064.16 to be applied towards the reduction of a debt of \$11,870 incurred in the erection of the dwelling-houses.

The land in Chauncy Place, formerly known as the Hollingshead lot, had been in the possession of the church for many years. Title to this large



property was derived through a deed from Richard and Ann Höllingshead, both making their marks, unto the deacons of First Church (of which they were members), dated the "seventeenth day of December, Ann^o Domⁱ One thousand six hundred and eighty, and in the thirty-second yeare of the Reign of King Charles the Second over England." The premises are referred to as "Situate at the *southerly* end of the Town of Boston." The grantors of the property were aged paupers, and the consideration for the conveyance was that they should continue to be supported by the church for the rest of their lives. There is a tradition that when the church took the property it was doubted whether it would pay for the expense of drawing and recording the deed. When Dr. Chauncy was minister he occupied a parsonage house which stood on the premises, gable end to the street, with a large garden and orchard adjoining. Rev. William Emerson afterwards occupied the same estate.

Efforts were made about this time to encourage practice in singing, "in order to bring forward such persons as feel an inclination to succeed our present very excellent choristers, who may from time to time be obliged to leave the seats, and whose gratuitous and generous services" are warmly appreciated. For this purpose a singing-school was formed, in 1823, under the control of the Standing Committee. The plan seems to have worked well, for a time at least, to judge by the report of the



committee; and shortly after a "scientific singer" was engaged to lead the choristers. In 1826 it was voted to introduce "some gentleman as a constant leader in the singing Loft," and that "the present female singer" have seventy-five dollars a year.

In the summer of 1826 the pastor received leave of absence to spend a year in Europe. During that period he assumed the expense of supplying the pulpit.

The Chauncy Place meeting-house was never quite satisfactory from the first. Extensive repairs and alterations were constantly in progress, the latter for the greater part with a view of obtaining more light. During these intervals the society vacated their own meeting-house, and accepted the kind invitations of Brattle Street and other churches to unite with them in worship. These favors on the part of sister churches, the record shows, were from time to time acknowledged.

During the ten years ending with 1825 the progress of Unitarianism was very marked. The number of new Unitarian churches in Boston exceeded that of any other denomination, and the support and attendance given them were commensurate with the increase. They attracted the most cultivated people, as well as the most active and prominent members of the various professions. The American Unitarian Association was formed in 1825, with its headquarters in Boston. This establishment has sustained the various interests of the



denomination, and has been widely recognized as its proper representative in all relations. It derives a moderate income from permanent sources, but depends largely for support on church contributions. First Church has always helped to carry on the work of this association, but has thus far taken no steps to enroll its pastors or any of its congregation as members.

In 1826 the Benevolent Fraternity of Churches was formed, originating with Rev. Joseph Tuckerman, minister of Chelsea, the Rev. Henry Ware, of the Second Church, and the Rev. Dr. Gannett, of Federal Street Church. For a quarter of a century Mr. Tuckerman had "ministered at large" to the poor of Boston. Besides his labors there had been much home missionary work in the same direction, but no organized efforts to sustain the cause. Mr. Tuckerman devoted himself with great zeal to the undertaking, and as a result of his labors a permanent ministry-at large was finally established. The range of membership is confined to the churches in old Boston, leaving out Roxbury and Charlestown, which pursue their own methods. The Fraternity has from that time on maintained several missionaries and four chapels, besides affording aid in similar but more general ways. Although a constant contributor to the treasury of this organization, it is nevertheless believed that there was no formal connection of First Church with the Fraternity before the year 1853.



The baptismal covenant of the church, commonly called the "Half Way Covenant," was dispensed with by vote of the church, July 6, 1828. Senior Deacon James Morrill alone, "differing widely in opinion from his brethren" in the matter, entered his disapproval on the record. A new pulpit was ordered this year, and on Christmas day the congregation of Trinity Church used the meeting-house for services.

In 1829, four years before the famous amendment to the Bill of Rights was passed, the "Proprietors of the First Church in Boston" became a corporation. Before the "Religious Freedom Act" of 1811 was passed, comparatively few religious societies in Massachusetts had been incorporated. Several causes combined in that year to bring about numerous acts of incorporation. Before the law was changed dissenting religious societies, as they were called, such as the Baptists, Universalists, and others, suddenly found that they had no standing in court; and even after it took effect some of them found it expedient to become specially incorporated, in order to make their position more secure as well as convenient. The effect of the new law was to undermine the security of the established churches and weaken the ties which bound them together. Any member of a parish was now allowed to leave the Congregational society and seek one of his own choice, provided always he constituted himself an actual member of the new society by contributing



to its support. But the final blow to the old system was struck by the amendment to the Bill of Rights in 1834. This change brought about an entire separation between Church and State.

For two centuries public sentiment had favored the support of religion by the State. Every change, however radical, had always recognized this condition. But now the old tie is broken, and churches of whatever name and wherever situated must rely upon themselves. The proprietors of First Church became incorporated by reason, apparently, of the refusal of the deacons to sign a deed of the vacant lot of land south of the church, which had already been sold by the Standing Committee. The deacons evidently declined to perform this act from a doubt (which has proved to be well grounded) as to the expediency of selling the property, and not because they would claim exclusive authority to make a deed. Not a little feeling betrayed itself on both sides; and the refusal was afterwards withdrawn at a meeting specially called by the deacons.

In addition to a weekly salary of twenty-five dollars, the pastor was furnished for some time with the parish dwelling-house on Summer Street and twenty-five cords of wood annually. The supply of fuel was kept up until the year 1829, when the sum of one hundred and twenty-five dollars was substituted in its place.

The two hundredth anniversary of the church was simply yet adequately commemorated by a sermon



from Dr. Frothingham, preached Sunday, Aug. 29, 1830, and is now in print.¹

The Sunday school is first mentioned at a committee meeting, Aug. 13, 1828, when it was "*Voted*, That, if application be made for the Vestry, to be used for a Sunday school, the disposal thereof be left with the Minister and Deacons." From a report, which was written five years later by Dr. Frothingham, it appears that the Chauncy Sunday School, as it was called, originated in a set-off from the Franklin Sunday School. The directors of the latter institution, finding that they could not accommodate all their scholars in one place, were allowed to use the vestry of First Church. The children of the society were invited to attend the school, and several of the ladies also were induced to teach. At the date of this report two thirds of the scholars and one half of the teachers belonged to the society. The school was supported by First Church, the chief item of the very trifling expense necessary to maintain it being for the supply of books (a multiplication of which, says Dr. Frothingham, is deemed to be absolutely hurtful). During one year the entire charges of this institution amounted to only thirteen dollars. The school, however, had done a good work, and the committee recommended that it be continued hereafter under the exclusive control and protection of the First

¹ The Commemoration by First Church of the two hundred and fiftieth Anniversary, etc., 70.



Church, at an annual expense of not over twenty-five dollars.

Deacon James Morrill died April 3, 1833, at the age of eighty-two. He was a member of the church for fifty-four years, one of its officers for forty-three years, and presided at annual meetings for twenty years in succession. "He was devoted to the interests of the society, and to the religion which he professed." The Sunday after he died, Dr. Frothingham preached his funeral sermon, an extract from which appears on the record.

About this time that type of philosophy known as "Transcendentalism" caused much discussion in this neighborhood. Ralph Waldo Emerson was held to have dissolved his connection with the ministry, not from want of religious faith or fervor, but because the prescribed forms did not adequately "express his intuitions of spiritual truth." Rev. George Ripley, who continued to preach for several years longer, has been called the recognized "expounder and champion of the new theology, which may, perhaps, be best characterized as hyper-spiritualism." Professor Andrews Norton led the opposition. So far as this controversy, which was quite as much philosophical as religious, concerned the churches, it dealt more with the evidences for the genuineness, authenticity, and authority of the New Testament writings than with the doctrines which they inculcate. This movement was to be recognized within and beyond the denomination, and has,



undoubtedly, issued in deeper and broader religion and in truer conceptions of the difference between the forms of truth and truth itself, as well as the fundamental distinction between faiths and the facts which sustain and illustrate them.

After 1838 fuel disappears entirely as a separate item to be taken into consideration in reckoning the amount of the minister's salary. It was deemed inexpedient in that year to sustain the Sunday school as then organized. But in the following year it was reopened on a new basis, and reported to be in a flourishing condition, with a membership of fifty scholars. A request to be allowed to use the meeting-house for an evening lecture on temperance could not be granted at this time from a lack of sufficient facilities for properly lighting the building.

The Fast Day afternoon service was abandoned in 1840. In 1841 Theodore Parker preached an ordination sermon at South Boston, which opened a controversy of grave importance. The substance of his opinions consisted in a denial of the miraculous element in the New Testament, while Christ was looked upon as a great moral and spiritual leader, without any attribute of the Godhead. His expositions were received with deep concern. It was suggested by some that he should be asked to withdraw from the Boston Association, of which he was a member; but he never was so approached. When, however, in regular order his turn came to preach at Thursday Lecture, the minister of First



Church, in the exercise of that prerogative which, handed down from old John Cotton, gave him the right to select the minister, thought fit to make some other arrangement. His connection with the denomination and the ministry was never formally severed, and he was enabled to keep up a very limited intercourse with one and another of the body by pulpit exchanges. His preaching soon brought him from West Roxbury to Boston, and attracted large and interested gatherings, which grew into a fixed congregation. He was admitted on all sides to be a man of fervent piety and deep devotion to the public good and morals. The effects of his broad Christianity are seen to-day in the liberalizing tendency common to the churches of every denomination in and around Boston, even to those of the straiter sects.

"First Church and its minister," writes the present pastor, "were much engaged to express their strong dissent from Mr. Parker's teachings, much, as was understood, to Mr. Parker's surprise, for he was scarcely able to see how one whose studies and even conclusions seemed to tend so much in the direction which he had so earnestly chosen could be pained and offended by his utterances. He failed to see that the ideas which the Christian story symbolized were of far more significance to Dr. Frothingham than any history, and that whether with or without sufficient reason he drew a broad, deep line between the preacher and the theolo-

gian, and might even prefer to rest in illusions rather than join those who held *illusions*, however instructive and helpful, to be all one with *delusions*. Perhaps his conflict was largely only with Mr. Parker's spirit and method; but it was sincere in its way, and emphasized in more than one sermon. Moreover, much which in Mr. Parker's understanding of Christianity had reached the stage of absolute denial was, to Dr. Frothingham, only a difficulty, a question, a matter to be considered, and not a part of his Gospel message to the great multitude. Mr. Parker was understood to deny the miraculous element of Christianity, and, while he recognized in Jesus a transcendent religious inspiration and moral elevation, to withhold assent to the persuasions of the Christian world as to his intellectual infallibility, and to his absolute moral perfection. He held very strongly to a kind of natural supernaturalism, and greatly prized the providential work of Jesus, while his own faith in God and providence and immortality was very strong and deep and practical. He maintained that he was a Christian in the sense in which Jesus was a Christian, though he also taught that the words of the Saviour as they have been handed down to us bear the impress and color of his land and age, and are not without their limitations."

A collection of hymns, called the "Christian Psalter," prepared by Dr. William P. Lunt, of Quincy, was introduced in the services of the church



on the second Sunday of February, 1842, in place of Dr. Belknap's "Psalms and Hymns."

During the year 1842 the proprietors made an inquiry as to the funds held for the church as a body of communicants by the deacons. The reply shows that there were such funds, and that they were held for pious and charitable uses, and were not regarded as in any way subject to the supervision of the proprietors; and no further action was taken in the premises. An account of these funds is annually given by the deacons to the communicant members.

The Chauncy Place meeting-house was remodelled in 1843. The alterations which were then made amounted almost to a reconstruction of the whole interior. The only stipulation was that the pillars which supported the galleries should not be disturbed. The ceiling of the church was set with sections of richly ornamented glass of varied hues, surmounted by what is now called a monitor roof, letting in the light at the sides. This plan, however, did not issue satisfactorily, and the side windows, which had been walled up, were reopened underneath the galleries. When the work was completed the Rev. Mr. Stetson, of Medford, a clerical brother and friend of Dr. Frothingham, on taking a view of the interior in company with the pastor, remarked, in his wonted humor, "Well, Brother Frothingham, so you have undertaken to raise Christians under glass!" The entrances to the church were altered, and the pulpit set back into

a recess in the wall, and subsequently connected with the vestry by spiral stairs. The entire cost of all these changes, and others which were found necessary, in order to make the result more satisfactory, came to nearly twelve thousand dollars. Even after these improvements, the effect produced by the peculiar arrangement for admitting light could not be called brilliant; and in addition to this drawback the ventilation was complained of, though perhaps without reason. With these exceptions, if such they were, the new plan of the interior was as pleasing and satisfactory as the plain style of architecture in those days would allow.

During the interval which elapsed between the second Sunday in June and the fourth Sunday in November, 1843, when the alterations were completed and they returned to their own meeting-house, the society availed themselves of a kind invitation to attend services in King's Chapel, which were conducted by Dr. Frothingham, in place of Dr. Greenwood, who was out of health. On their return the old organ was replaced by a new one, which was paid for by subscriptions and the proceeds arising from the sale of the former instrument.

At the annual meeting in 1844 the minister referred to the case of several persons who attended the communion service and yet had never signed the church covenant, as showing the difficulty of deciding who should be called church members. The sentiment of the brethren present was that such persons



should make good their connection by signing the proper articles. The pastor was at the same time allowed "to receive the names of all those who were previously members of other churches, using only his own discretion, and without any other formality than that of announcing to the church the names so added." At the same meeting a new covenant, drawn up by the minister to conform more nearly to the original one (now in use), was presented and accepted.

At this period the fund for the society's poor, known as the "Charity Fund," was found to be greatly in excess of the amount needed to supply the beneficiaries, and some difficulty arose as to the proper disposal of the surplus, in order to avoid accumulation, which was agreed to be undesirable. The suggestion was offered, and favorably received, that a portion might be applied to the relief of certain persons who were not classed strictly among "the poor" of the society. Even this additional object did not entirely exhaust the yearly balance, which continued to increase until the enlarged form of Sunday school, going into effect nine or ten years later, provided a satisfactory remedy for the perplexity. During the remainder of this decade the meetings of the proprietors were chiefly occupied with matters of business. The congregation gradually disposed of all the real estate on Summer Street, and, after paying off the debt and current expenses, invested the balance as a permanent fund. The result was a much improved condition of the financial affairs of the society.



In the beginning of the year 1849 Dr. Frothingham's health, as has been previously mentioned, began seriously to decline. Under these circumstances he addressed a letter to the society asking them to seek for some one who might assist him in the discharge of his duties; and also (if the state of his health required) that he might be allowed a temporary absence, and to supply the pulpit during that time as he best could.

The communication was received, as the record shows, with "expressions of deep regret" and the "kindest and warmest sympathies" towards their "esteemed and beloved minister." A committee was chosen to take the matter into consideration. Their report recommends "that the Proprietors do express their acquiescence in the proposition made by the Rev. Dr. Frothingham in relation to the appointment of an assistant minister, and their determination to proceed to such appointment as soon as a person shall be found who will unite in his favor the voices of the society, and whose appointment will be agreeable to our Pastor." As for that part of the letter which relates to a temporary absence, the report states it to have been already acted upon and satisfactorily settled by the Standing Committee, whose action no doubt will "meet with the entire approbation of the proprietors." The recommendation was sanctioned by the society; and a letter, in reply to that of Dr. Frothingham, expressing a "deep feeling of interest and solicitude" placed in his hands previous to his departure for Europe.



On his return in the autumn of 1849, Dr. Frothingham, not having obtained that complete restoration of health for which he had hoped, renewed his request that a colleague might be appointed; but finally addressed a note to a meeting called for the purpose of choosing a new minister, expressing the desire that this minister might be called as successor and not as colleague. For this purpose he tendered his resignation, Dec. 19, 1849, to take effect on or before the anniversary of his ordination. The letter is full of the deepest gratitude for the kindness of his people, and the warmest desires for their future well-being. A vote was then passed accepting his resignation, to take effect March 15, 1850. The reply of the church is full of love and esteem towards their minister for his "constant and well-performed labor," and "entertains the hope (which was so happily fulfilled) that the personal and friendly relations which have subsisted between them may still be cherished and preserved."

During the thirty-nine years ending in 1853, two hundred and twenty-six persons signed the covenant. In the same period, four hundred and seventy-one¹ children were baptized, two hundred and fifty-two of whom were males, and two hundred and nineteen females.

¹ In addition to this number one hundred and five inmates of the Boston Female Asylum appear, by the record, to have been baptized, at intervals, between 1824 and 1842.



CHAPTER VIII.

1850-1880.

RUFUS ELLIS.

Settlement of Rev. Rufus Ellis. — Establishment of a Free Sunday School. — Church Work. — Children and Families gathered for Missionary Work beyond the Limits of the Organized Congregation. — Sewing-Schools. — Employment Societies. — Instruction in Dressmaking. — Newsboys' School. — Past and Present Workers in the Church, and their Memorial. — Gas Introduced. — Union Services in the Summer. — A more Open Communion. — Thursday Lecture Revived for a Time. — Dr. Frothingham's "Shade of the Past." — Chauncy Place becomes Chauncy Street. — Public Funeral of Edward Everett. — Proposal to build a New House of Worship. — Progress and Completion of the Work. — Laying of Corner-Stone. — Last Services in Old Church. — Dedication. — Church Described. — Its Cost. — Liberal Contributions. — Two Hundred and Fiftieth Anniversary.

AFTER the resignation of Dr. Frothingham took effect, the meetings of the communicants, held heretofore at the house of the pastor, were suspended for three years. During this period the church had no settled minister. While Dr. Frothingham was absent in Europe, and for some time after his return, the Rev. Dr. Walker supplied the pulpit. Several ministers — all of whom have since become well known, in this community at least —



were invited to succeed Dr. Frothingham, but for various reasons they all felt obliged to decline the call. At a meeting of the proprietors, held Feb. 28, 1853, it was voted, unanimously, that the Standing Committee be requested to communicate with the Rev. Rufus Ellis, of Northampton, Mass., with full power to invite him, if they see fit, to become the pastor of the church. The following letter of invitation was accordingly sent the next day:—

Boston, Feb. 21, 1853.

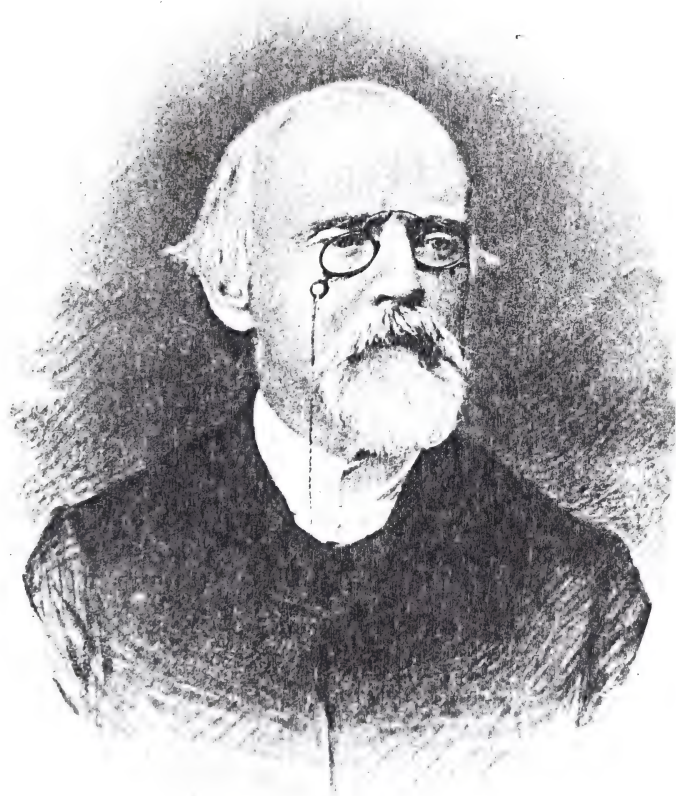
MY DEAR SIR,—At a meeting of the proprietors of the First Church, held in the meeting-house yesterday, Hon. Charles Francis Adams in the chair, it was voted, unanimously, that the Standing Committee should be requested to communicate with you, having full power to invite you to become the pastor of our church. The Standing Committee do now, therefore, in their name respectfully invite you to assume the pastoral office among us. We do not think it necessary or becoming, at the present time, to go beyond the immediate object of the commission which it is so agreeable to all of us to perform. We shall await with deep interest your reply, and earnestly hoping that it will be favorable to our wishes.

On behalf of the Committee.

The letter from Mr. Ellis accepting the call is dated Northampton, March 8, 1853.

At a meeting of the communicant members on March 20, called by Deacon Foster in consequence of the happy unanimity of the society in inviting Rev. Rufus Ellis to become their pastor, it was unanimously voted to “offer him their hearty wel-





Rufus Ellis.

come, and assure him of their cheerful fellowship; that they rejoice in the hope of his public teaching, his private counsel, and his friendly sympathy; and that they pray that this new connection may be crowned with the blessing of God, and with all the fruits of Christian unity and zeal."

Mr. Ellis sent a reply to this assurance of welcome, a portion of which is copied in the records, and reads as follows:—

"A word from the Church, strictly so called, has a peculiar value. Making the largest allowance for the honest difficulties that keep some from the Lord's table, it cannot be accounted an illiberality to regard the body of communicants as the heart of a society,—the source of its truest vitality. It is the Church that lives. It has life in itself."

The present pastor was installed May 4, 1853. All the so-called Unitarian churches of Boston and vicinity attended by pastor and delegates except King's Chapel, which acknowledged "the kindness and courtesy of the invitation, but in conformity with all previous usage on similar occasions, respectfully decline the sending a delegate."

The following letter, full of historic interest, from Dr. Charles Lowell, regretting his physical inability to be present, while at the same time he was with them in spirit, was read by Dr. Frothingham.

MY CHRISTIAN BRETHREN AND FRIENDS,—I am prevented, in the providence of God,—a providence always wise and good,—from being with you in person, as you invited me to be, at the installation of your new pastor.



But I am not prevented from being with you in spirit, nor from offering up in my retirement my prayers for your welfare.

Chauncy, not the least eminent in your succession of ministers, was the friend and eulogist of my most distinguished predecessor, and preached at the ordination of the eminently good man who succeeded him in the ministry.

The noble countenance of Clarke, whose name would add lustre to any line of pastors, I well remember. Emerson was my instructor in childhood, and I enjoyed an affectionate friendship with him from my settlement in the ministry to the time of his translation to heaven. To Abbot, who "being made perfect in a short time, fulfilled a long time," I gave the right hand of fellowship on his coming to this charge.

The friendship of his successor, whose presence and sympathy you are still permitted to enjoy, I have had the privilege of possessing; and with not a few of yourselves, too, I have had frequent and affectionate communion as a minister and a friend.

It is known only to Him who knoweth all things whether I shall be ever allowed to meet you again in the public duties or private intercourse of life; but it is my desire and prayer for you that "your conversation may be as it becometh the gospel of Christ, and that whether I come and see you or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, striving together for the faith of the gospel."

Your friend, as I trust, in the best bonds,

CHARLES LOWELL.

May 3, 1853.

The letter of dismissal from the church in Northampton was next read and accepted. Dr. Frothingham then made a verbal statement of the call of Mr. Ellis and his acceptance thereof, which, "after some



conversation," was allowed to take the place of the reading from the records.

The exercises in the church were conducted as follows: Rev. O. B. Frothingham offered the introductory prayer; Rev. J. I. T. Coolidge read the Scriptures. Then followed the hymn of installation (Ravenscroft, ob. 1630), beginning, "Eternal Lord! To Thee the Church,"—written for the occasion by N. L. Frothingham; Rev. George E. Ellis (brother of the pastor and minister of Harvard Church, Charlestown) preached the sermon from 1 Tim. i. 15; prayer of installation, by Rev. N. L. Frothingham; Psalm (Ellenwood, H. K. O.), beginning, "The Lord gave the Word; 't was the Word of his Truth,"—also written for the occasion by Dr. Frothingham; charge, by Rev. E. S. Gannett; right hand of fellowship, by Rev. F. D. Huntington; address to the society, by Rev. Chandler Robbins. Then after an anthem, the concluding prayer by Rev. Alexander Young, and the benediction by the pastor.

At the close of the exercises in the church, which were very well attended, the pastors and delegates to the council and invited guests dined in Chapman Hall. Dr. Morison, of Milton, asked the blessing at the table. The Hon. Edward Everett presided, and made a brief and happy address in behalf of the society, which was followed by a very few words from Dr. Gannett, Hon. James Savage, Rev. George E. Ellis, and the pastor.

One of the first enterprises which was under-

taken after the settlement of the present minister was the establishment of a new form of Sunday school. In November, 1853, the attempt was first made to increase the membership of that institution from children outside of the congregation. Before this change took place the Sunday school was distinctively a parish gathering. Since that time it has been the endeavor of the workers in this cause to enlarge the field of Christian labor. The success of these efforts is seen in the steady growth of the institution in all that makes it worth sustaining. The Sunday school has gradually become, in the largest sense, the life of the church. Without interfering with any established rights or cherished usages it has quietly assumed a place of its own.

The earliest detailed account of the plan and working of the school is contained in a pamphlet on "Church Work," written by the present minister in 1867. The establishment then numbered two hundred children, besides twenty or thirty from Mrs. Gwynne's Home. "These children," he says, "belong to families that for the most part have no connection with any church, and on that account it was supposed, at the outset, that the school would be constantly changing; but it has been a great satisfaction to find that the contrary is the case. Our children come steadily and perseveringly from all parts of the city; some of them have gone away from Boston, and have found us again of their own accord



on their return." In his report on this subject, written in 1879, the minister says:—

" Out of a school that numbers 450 children, 207 still gathered on the first Sunday in July, when scarcely a dozen of our own families remained in town; while on the opening Sunday in September, the congregation still being absent, and the service a union service, 272 children presented themselves. These children come from 220 families. Many of them live at a long distance from the church, as, for example, in Roxbury, South Boston, Washington Village, East Cambridge; but although the school opens by quarter after nine,—an early Sunday hour in these days,—forty of them have been neither late nor absent during the six months of winter, while 195 have won prizes for punctuality. The average attendance between last Easter and this Easter just passed has been 330, and between Easter and Christmas 336. One girl in seven years has been neither absent nor tardy. The average age of the children is between twelve and thirteen; and there are thirty-eight teachers, besides the superintendent and visitor, and five who are connected with the library."

The same report (in 1879) adds:—

" It is the plan of the school that the teachers should, so far as possible, put themselves into friendly and Christian relations with the families of their scholars, and extend to them the offices of Christian sympathy which are appropriate to a Christian household. (The aim is constantly to exert the highest Christian influence upon the children,—*not to entertain* them, but to make them happy in what to them is their church.) It is believed that the tie is a strong one, and that the outcome of the work is a very practical Christianity. Our children come to us year by year, grow up in our congregation, and return to it from their absences in our own or in foreign lands as to their



religious home. Their names are to be found on all my parish registers, and go far to redeem the church from the reproach of being a club of the luxurious or the gathering of class or clan. It is in some good measure a people's church; at all events, a church for the people if they choose to have it so."

Of the other branches and outgrowths of the Sunday school the earlier report proceeds to mention the infant department, as it is called, then numbering some forty-six scholars, under the charge of a special teacher in a separate room. This system is retained at the present day. Once a month the older scholars unite in reciting to the pastor carefully prepared answers to questions which are printed and distributed for the purpose.

The great Christian festivals of Christmas and Easter are celebrated by the whole school. On the former occasion, besides the service in the church, the children assemble in the chapel and receive carefully selected, useful, and substantial gifts. At Easter they receive some simple flowers.

Many of the teachers visit the families of their scholars, not always to offer aid, but simply to make a friendly call. In this way several of them have come to look upon "First Church as their stated place of worship, and to the pastor for those parochial services" which it is always "his desire and purpose" to render.

It is part of the plan of the Sunday school to provide for outward wants, so far as possible, "in that



spirit of Christian love which makes receiving as well as giving a blessing." In this endeavor the most careful judgment is exercised in the selection of the beneficiaries and the adoption of the means for assistance.

Out of the Sunday school sprang various useful organizations for church work, which are still in active operation. Families connected with the Sunday school or church receive work from an employment society, the members of which cut out the cloth at home, and give it to the women to make into garments. Each woman is allowed about fifty cents a week, and the privilege of buying what is made up at the cost of the material. In this way much genuine assistance is afforded with a small outlay, and under the most favorable auspices. "In 1877-78 the donations to this cause were \$595, and the receipts from sales of garments, \$508.53. The amount paid for materials was \$394.45, and to the workwomen, \$722.63. Work was given to about seventy women, and there were about fourteen hundred garments sold. These garments brought enough to cover the cost of materials, and some of them a few cents apiece more, so that there was more to be used in the payment for work than the amount subscribed. The garments are very largely bought by the mothers of the Sunday-school children and their friends. It may be added that it is one of the aims of this charity to furnish by the way valuable instruction in sewing."



Another most useful and efficient instrumentality is the sewing-school, which gathers, besides the Sunday-school children, a few of their acquaintances from the outside. This has always been eminently successful. So popular did it become during the winter of 1877-78, that "the second Saturday, when one hundred and seventeen children collected, it was necessary, both on account of the lack of accommodations and the difficulty in procuring teachers, to give notice that no more outside the limits of the Sunday school should be brought without leave."

The mode of conducting the school is very simple. The children are divided into classes, each under the direction of a competent teacher. The size and number of these classes vary, of course, according to circumstances. At one time there were from ten to twelve, numbering eight or nine children in each. The order and discipline are of the best, and the work very satisfactory for such young people. The children do not work for themselves, but send the garments to worthy institutions, such as the Children's Mission or Mrs. Gwynne's Home. "Prizes, consisting of the calico for a gown or an apron, as a reward for punctual attendance are distributed on the last afternoon of the school." Since this enterprise was started sewing has been introduced into the public schools, but not to such an extent as to render unnecessary additional teaching to the children who wish to grow up with an understanding use of their hands.



Graduates from the sewing-school, with perhaps a few exceptions, make up the dressmaking class. It has lately numbered thirty-four girls, who, under the direction of efficient teachers, perform a great deal of skilled labor. They meet in the chapel twice each week during the church season.

In connection with the sewing-school was formed a singing-school. Under the direction of an able instructress the children have been taught to sing with great readiness and accuracy. The fruits of this admirable training are enjoyed by the congregation on such occasions as Easter and Christmas.

About the time the present form of Sunday-school was started, and perhaps a little before, the ladies of the congregation formed a parish sewing-circle. The garments which they make are placed where they will do the most good, without reference to any particular class or object. During the war of the Rebellion the scope of its charity reached out far and wide. Of late years the attendance on this work has much increased. The meetings are held in the chapel every Thursday morning from the annual Thanksgiving to the annual Fast.

In the year 1866 one of the ladies of the parish set up a vacation school, designed to keep the poorer children, who are unable to leave the city during the summer months, out of mischief. It lasted three or four years, and proved a great comfort to the parents of the children. Sixty children comprised this



school, with an average attendance of about one half that number.

One of the last, but at the same time most original, charities was the newsboys' school, which began in the opening year of the civil war. The request for the use of the front basement room (in Chauncy Street Church) for a free school for the instruction in writing of "poor young lads, especially newsboys," was granted Oct. 30, 1861. Proposed as an "experiment, simply, in doing good," the success of which must needs be doubtful, one of the parish volunteered to provide for the entire direction and expense. The school never drew any support from the quarterly collections of the church. Some of the teachers came from other parishes. The attendance numbered from one to two hundred,—very fluctuating, of course, from the nature of the material, though less so perhaps than one would expect. At the close of his account of this establishment the minister says: "Were this attendance enforced in some way by making it a condition for receiving a license to trade or labor in our streets, nothing would be wanting to make this school altogether, as it has been already largely, successful. So long as such boys are allowed to pursue their calling in the streets, schools adapted to their wants should be provided at the public cost and under public supervision. No one can estimate the amount of crime and misery which would be prevented in this way. The City Government have been earnestly



asked to see to this thing, and until some public provision shall have been made our school will be carried on, doing what can be done in the circumstances. From this school sprang a systematic visitation of the jail, which again suggested to some good Christian people in a sister parish the Children's Aid Society, with its excellent methods and ministries, and its two country homes for neglected and exposed children of tender years."

The attempt has thus been made to give a hasty sketch of all the charities of First Church. Very little can be known of actual results from such a brief summary. From the time when the present minister first came among them there has been a vast deal of good done by various members of the congregation which cannot be set down in writing. "By their works ye shall know them" is all that can be said of these faithful laborers. Whether in times of special need, or in the ordinary routine of daily life, there have been those at hand ready and willing to bear every burden and offer any sacrifice, those whose lives have been inseparably bound up and blended with the work of this religious society. To mention the foremost among those who have succeeded in making this church a centre of charities and, as we may say without arrogance, a beneficent power in this city, would require no deep reflection on the part of any one familiar with our recent history. To those not so privileged it will suffice to point to the present Sunday school, and



then to place them in front of one of those beautiful memorial windows which adorn the chapel.

RECEIPTS FOR THE YEAR 1880-81.

| | |
|---|-------------|
| From Miss Tileston's Legacy | \$30.00 |
| From Church Funds for the use of the Poor | 1,158.00 |
| Interest upon Bank Deposit | 19.48 |
| Easter Collection | 468.06 |
| June Collection | 191.24 |
| November Collection | 323.07 |
| Christmas Collection | 379.40 |
| Easter Flowers for the Children | 121.00 |
| Children's Christmas Tree | 355.00 |
| Country Week and Seashore Home | 131.00 |
| Free Hospital for Women | 340.00 |
| Sewing-Circle | 110.00 |
| Associated Charities | 249.22 |
| Employment Society | 603.00 |
| Instruction in Dressmaking | 262.10 |
| Gift for Visitor's Salary | 300.00 |
| Minister's Poor Purse | 400.00 |
| African Methodist Church, Charles Street | 450.00 |
| Quarterly Charity Lecture | 160.00 |
| American Unitarian Association | 1,000.00 |
| Fraternity of Churches (1880-81 and 1881-82) | 950.00 |
| Church in Ann Arbor | 500.00 |
| "Sunday School Gazettes" | 42.75 |
| Contributions of Sunday School and Minister's Class to their own charities | 71.60 |
| Church in Francetown, N. H. | 35.00 |
| Contribution to 250th Anniversary | 1,555.00 |
| | <hr/> |
| | \$10,205.01 |

The earliest attempt to introduce gas into the church was made Dec. 9, 1854, the committee on repairs being authorized, if they deemed it expedient, to fit up the house for the purpose.

In answer to a proposal from Dr. Peabody of King's Chapel, in 1855, to form a union service



for some summer Sundays between Chauncy Street, Brattle Street, and the Chapel societies, the pastor of First Church was instructed to express the disinclination of the proprietors to any suspension of services, but at the same time to extend a cordial offer of accommodation to both the other churches if they saw fit to close their meeting-houses during any portion of that period. Although union services were indulged in at a later period, before the society removed from Chauncy Street, they always took place in First Church meeting-house, so that the church itself remained open throughout the entire year.

In 1856 the minister referred to the objections which some had to signing the covenant as a necessary requirement before allowance of participation in the communion could be granted. Whereupon Dr. Frothingham proposed the following vote, which passed, with one dissenting voice:¹ "That our pastor may feel authorized to admit any persons to our service of communion on their application, at his discretion." The subject of the use of a Liturgy in the Sunday worship was discussed at the same time, but no decided steps were taken. The character of the church music formed a frequent topic of discussion also at this period, some clinging to the old-fashioned congregational tunes, while others favored richer and more elaborate productions.

¹ Deacon Foster.



The subject of further enlarging the invitation to the Lord's Supper was introduced by Dr. Frothingham, April 1, 1858. He offered a form substantially as follows: "The ordinance of the Lord's Supper will be administered after the benediction and in behalf of the church. I invite all who desire to commemorate the love of the Lord Jesus to take part with us in the observance." The question was finally reserved for a special meeting to be held a week later, when, nine communicants expressing themselves in favor and four opposed, it was decided to leave it to the discretion of the pastor to act as he should see fit.

In the journal of Dr. Frothingham there is the following entry: "Thursday" (November 1), 1849, "preached the Lecture, Mr. Robbins failing to appear." Between this date and Sunday, March 10, 1850, when Dr. Frothingham preached his farewell sermon, the journal, while it contains other entries, does not mention the "Thursday Lecture," so that it is safe to conclude that it was discontinued somewhere during that interval. The present minister made an effort to revive it at an early period in his ministry.

"April 8, 1858 (eleven o'clock, A. M.). Thursday Lecture was resumed. Ministers of all denominations — Baptists, Methodists, Orthodox, Congregationalists, and Episcopalians — were invited to take their turn. Among others, the Rev. James Freeman Clarke, and the late Dr. Diman, of Provi-



dence (then of Brookline, Mass.), performed the service."

In this modified shape the famous lecture, which formerly sustained a public character, lingered for three or four years as a shadow of the past, and then vanished. The fortunes of "Thursday Lecture" are traced by Dr. Frothingham in "The Shade of the Past," written in 1833, at the close of the second century after its establishment, and printed by request of the Boston Association of Congregational Ministers.

The importance which this ancient observance sustained while it lived and flourished, as well as its close connection with the parent church, are faithfully portrayed in this charming narrative. "The lecture," he says, "was a meeting of all that claimed or deserved respect in the neighborhood. The magistrates were present; the governor of the colony, with his counsellors; and after its appropriate offices were ended it was followed by a convention of the people, at which municipal regulations were adopted, and questions of every kind were discussed that engaged the minds of the men of that day."

For more than half a century after its foundation by Cotton the lecture steadily advanced in splendor and importance. There is a gathering of the people from every quarter on the fifth day of the week to attend the service. "The villages send their yeomen and pastors. The walls of Harvard College, that have risen at Newtown, contribute of its few



students and fellows to swell the train. The schools dismiss their pupils in the forenoon, and are kept no more that day, in order that no one may be deprived of so great a privilege. The rough weather of a climate yet sterner than it has since been scarcely thins the assembly that comes to warm itself with fervent words, and the glow of a common interest, and the breath of its own crowd in a cold place. What an array is here of dignity and sanctity and comeliness! What squares of scarlet cloaks! What borders of white but artificial hair! What living complexions — of a less shining whiteness, and less presumptuously red — upon many fair but solemn faces, which the arguments of Cotton have divested of their veils! And lest anything should be wanting to so important an occasion, and lest a single interesting association of life should be overlooked or unconnected with it, I hear the list of names repeated with a loud voice of those who ‘intend,’ as the good phrase still is, to make themselves the happiest of mortals. Thus the recreations of the young and the meditations of the old, the order of the churches and the guidance of the State, the market-place and the marriage-ring, have their remembrances bound together in this ancient service.”

Until 1679 the lecture was “conducted by the pastors and teachers of the old congregation.” In that year a change took place, the old church allowing the ministers of other churches to assist in the service. Towards the close of the century its popu-

larity began to wane. Cotton Mather "gave notice that the lecture was to begin at eleven o'clock instead of twelve; reproved the townspeople that attended no better; and declared that it would be an omen of their not enjoying it long, if they did not amend." The weather was oftentimes offered as an excuse. On one occasion, in 1715, during a violent storm, only sixteen women and two hundred men were present. The return to Boston after the siege was over raised the occasion into temporary prominence after seventy years of steady neglect. "After this," says Dr. Frothingham, "the lecture might have closed its doors. It had enough of honor; I will add nothing further to its history."

The death of "the eminent historian and excellent man, William H. Prescott, late a worshipper in First Church," is noticed in an entry on the church records, Jan. 30, 1859. Funeral services were held at the church on the afternoon of the following day, and the minister preached a sermon entitled "The Joy of the Christian Mourner" on the following Sunday, February 6, which was printed by request of the society.

Towards the close of this year the record contains a report of the only legal contest in which the church was ever engaged. The corporation was obliged to bring the suit against the city of Boston, to recover damages for the laying out of Chauncy Place as a public highway. The land thus taken, it will be remembered, became the property of the church

under the deed from the Hollingsheads in 1680, and compensation was now asked for so much of it as had been taken for the public use in opening the street. The city, on the other hand, asserted that the church had already dedicated the property for a public highway before the widening took place, and consequently that no legal damages had accrued by reason of any further taking. The report discusses at length the progress of the suit, which, with the assistance of "able counsel" engaged in their behalf, resulted satisfactorily to the interests of the church.

"Deacon James Hiller Foster died Wednesday, Dec. 10, 1862, at the advanced age of eighty-nine, having served the church in his office since March 5, 1815."

Early in the year 1865 the society lost the fellowship of one whose services in Church as well as State were "in a degree of eminence" seldom surpassed. The entry on the records of the corporation is as follows:—

"Boston, Jan. 15, 1865. The church was this day called to mourn the loss of one of its most worthy members in the person of the Hon. Edward Everett, who died at his residence, No. 32 Summer Street, at about four o'clock this morning, seventy years nine months and four days old."

Several meetings of the Standing Committee were held to make appropriate arrangements for the funeral ceremonies, and to transcribe on the records



of the church a fitting sense of their heavy bereavement. The following is a copy of the resolutions adopted by the church:—

“Whereas it has pleased the All-Wise Disposer of events to remove from us by sudden death our esteemed fellow-worshipper and beloved friend, Edward Everett; and

“Whereas we wish to put on record an expression of our sense of the great private worth which distinguished him no less than his public virtues: therefore be it

“*Resolved*, That by his decease the members of the First Church and Congregation have lost one strongly endeared to them by the association which has bound them together as worshippers for many years past.

“*Resolved*, That we gratefully remember the constant interest which our departed friend took in the welfare of our venerable society,—an interest which he manifested to the last by his regular attendance on the offices of the sanctuary.

“*Resolved*, That we shall always hold his example in precious remembrance as of one who, while he dignified our nation, especially in her hour of trial, by his unselfish patriotism, humanity, and generous devotion to the cause of Republican liberty, was no less distinguished for the humility, purity, and Christian excellence of his private life.

“*Resolved*, That these resolutions be placed on the records of the First Church, and that a copy be transmitted to the family of the deceased with the assurance of our most tender sympathy in this hour of their heavy bereavement.”

Public funeral services were held in First Church on Thursday, January 19; and besides an address on that occasion, the pastor delivered a sermon on



the following Sunday on "The Life, Services, and Character of Edward Everett," both of which were printed, together with the account of the action of the church on the occasion of his death.

At the annual meeting, May 28, 1865, Mr. William Everett made a proposal, which the record says was "very well received," that the society should have a new house of worship in some more favorable location. Acting upon this suggestion, no doubt, Mr. Ralph Huntington and other proprietors of First Church requested the Standing Committee, June 21, to call a parish meeting for the consideration of the expediency of building a new church. In accordance with this request a special meeting of the proprietors, duly notified according to law, was held Thursday, June 29, 1865, at which twenty-one members were present. It was then voted, unanimously, to sell the present church property, and all other property belonging to the society, in such manner and at such times as shall seem expedient to the committee to be appointed for the purpose. The same committee were further authorized to purchase land, and build a new church edifice, with a vestry and parsonage, if they deem expedient.

Thomas B. Wales, moderator, in conformity with the vote of the meeting, then nominated George O. Shattuck, Samuel H. Gookin, Edward Austin, Turner Sargent, and John E. Piper, to join the Standing Committee of seven, namely, Thomas B. Wales, Otis Rich, Samuel L. Abbot, George W. Messin-



ger, Nathaniel Thayer, John Collamore, and D. W. Salisbury, and together constitute a building committee. This nomination, being referred to the meeting, was unanimously confirmed.

"Attest, GEORGE O. HARRIS, *Clerk*."

The committee thus chosen were not long in selecting the present site for a new meeting-house. The lot of land on which the present church edifice stands "was purchased of the city of Boston for three dollars per foot, payable ten per cent cash, and the balance in nine instalments and interest at six per cent. The treasurer paid the first instalment of \$5,880 in September, 1865, and received a bond of the city. The lot purchased contains 19,600 feet, the full value of which at three dollars per foot is \$58,800."

On account of the high prices which then prevailed for materials and labor it was deemed inexpedient at this time to do more than lay a foundation for the new edifice. It was also decided not to sell the Chauncy Street church property until some more definite arrangements should be made with regard to a removal.¹

In the following year a letter was addressed to the vicar of Old Boston (England) in hopes of securing the "John Cotton pulpit" for a place in the new church. The attempt, however, proved unsuccessful.

The corner-stone of the new church edifice was

¹ The vote to sell the Chauncy Street meeting-house was not taken until April 21, 1868.

laid on Fast Day, April 4, 1867, with appropriate ceremonies, in presence of a large assembly. T. B. Wales, Esq., chairman of the Standing Committee, called the meeting to order, and the chairman of the Building Committee, Hon. G. W. Messinger, made an appropriate statement. Rev. Rufus Ellis, the pastor of the society, then read an account of the contents of the box to be placed under the stone, as follows : —

1. A silver plate, upon which are inscribed the name of the church, the date of laying the corner-stone, the names of the pastor, of the Standing and Building Committees, the architects, and the principal contractors for building the house.

2. Service book used in the church, containing an account of the various pastors, and the dates of their settlements; also of the houses of worship, and a copy of the covenant.

3. A small pamphlet, giving an account of church work in First Church for the year 1866-67.

4. A bi-centennial sermon, in manuscript, preached by Rev. Dr. Frothingham, then pastor of the church, on the 29th August, 1830, and printed at that time by the society.

5. Sermon, etc., at the installation of the present pastor, May 4, 1853.

6. Commemorative discourses upon Hon. Edward Everett and William Hickling Prescott, members of the parish, by the present pastor.

7. Copy of the Christian Register for March 30, 1867, containing a short description of the church.

8. Copy of hymn, by Rev. Dr. Frothingham, upon the laying of the corner-stone.

9. Rules and orders, and names of Board of Aldermen

and Common Council, etc., for 1867, with inaugural address of his Honor, Mayor Norcross.

10. Boston Daily Advertiser, Post, and Journal for April 4, 1867, and Evening Transcript and Traveller for April 3.
11. Boston Almanac and Directory for 1867.
12. Monthly Religious Magazine for April, 1867.
13. Sundry pieces of currency.

The following is a copy of the inscription on the plate : —

This corner-stone of the First Church in Boston was laid with appropriate ceremonies on Fast Day, April 4, 1867.

PASTOR.

Rev. Rufus Ellis.

BUILDING COMMITTEE.

| | |
|---------------------|-------------------|
| Thomas B. Wales, | Nathaniel Thayer, |
| Samuel L. Abbot, | D. W. Salisbury, |
| Samuel H. Gookin, | Edward Austin, |
| George O. Shattuck, | Horace Dupee, |
| G. W. Messinger, | John Collamore, |
| Turner Sargent, | George O. Harris. |

ARCHITECTS.

Ware and Van Brunt.

CONTRACTORS.

Augustus Lothrop and Benjamin D. Whitcomb.

The pastor then read a few sentences from 2 Chronicles ii. and from 1 Corinthians iii.; and, striking the corner-stone, said, —

“In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost: Amen.

“I lay the corner-stone of an edifice to be here erected by the name of the First Church of Christ, and to be devoted to the service of Almighty God, through his Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. Other foundation can no man lay



than that which is laid, even Jesus Christ, in whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins. The Law was given by Moses; but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. Amen."

Rev. Dr. Gannett then offered a singularly appropriate prayer, which was followed by a brief address from the minister. Mr. Ellis then said, —

"There is one, always near to the heart of this congregation, whose enforced absence from these services we all deeply regret. He has not forgotten us, but has put into my hands this hymn, prepared to be read after the event, and yet so fitting the occasion that, even against his wishes, I must take the liberty of reading it to you here and now, that our dear and honored friend may be connected through some uttered words with this solemn and glad occasion."

The pastor then read the beautiful hymn, written by Dr. Frothingham, entitled "Laying the Corner-Stone of a Church," after which the doxology — "From all that dwell," etc. — was sung by the assembly, and the benediction pronounced by the pastor. The weather was fine, and the occasion in every way satisfactory.

The following description of the interior decorations of the present church edifice was written by the architects: —

"The subjects of the windows in the body of the church are: On the north side, 'The Transfiguration' (erected in memory of Turner Sargent) and 'The Syro-Phœnician Woman,' contributed by Miss Elizabeth Foster. On the south side, 'The Good Samaritan' (erected in memory of



John Eliot Thayer) and 'St. John at the Last Supper' (erected in memory of Miss Abby Joy).

"At either end of the transepts are similar windows, but of much greater size, being nearly twenty feet high. Those in the north transept contain full-length figures, about the size of life, of St. John and St. Paul. The subjects beneath are 'The Women and the Angel at the Sepulchre' and the 'Departure of Paul from Ephesus.' The St. John window is erected in memory of Peter C. Brooks, and the St. Paul window in memory of Thomas Beale Wales.

"The south transept is occupied by windows of similar size (contributed by Messrs. Nathaniel Thayer and Edward Austin), containing, in the place of the Apostles opposite, inscriptions relating to the history of the church. On one is the covenant under which the church was gathered, signed by Governors Winthrop and Dudley, etc. Beneath is the 'Vision of the Man of Macedonia,' — the carrying of the gospel into Europe having been considered by the founders of this church as the prototype of its introduction into America, the text 'Come over and help us' occurring in the original seal of the colony. The other window contains a list of the ministers of the church during the two hundred and thirty-eight years since its foundation. Beneath are figures of the four evangelists. The other windows were furnished out of the funds of the society, and consist, for the most part, merely of decorative work. The great Rose, however, at the end of the church, over the entrance, contains in the centre a figure of the Lamb, and about it a choir of angels singing and playing upon various instruments. In the north transept is also a small window, nearly on a level with the eye, containing in four compartments the story of the Prodigal Son. . . .

"All the windows are filled with English glass, executed in London in accordance with the architects' sketches, and are made of what is called mosaic glass work, as distinguished from enamel painting. . . .



"The color decorations of the church, which are very carefully studied, and executed with great elegance, are quiet, but rich in effect, and carry out the general sentiment of gravity and repose intended to be conveyed by the treatment of the whole interior. From the ends of the hammer-beams, and from the roof at the centre of the church, are suspended chandeliers of bronze and gold. . . .

"The church contains one hundred and eighty-seven pews, provided to accommodate nine hundred and fifty-five persons. It is heated and ventilated by steam."

The chapel also has lately been enriched by two beautiful memorial windows. The subject of the one on the right as you enter from Marlborough Street is St. Christopher. This window was the gift of Miss Mary Anne Wales, in memory of Fanny Cabot Paine. The one on the left is "The Young David," and is dedicated by his parents to the memory of Gurdon Saltonstall.

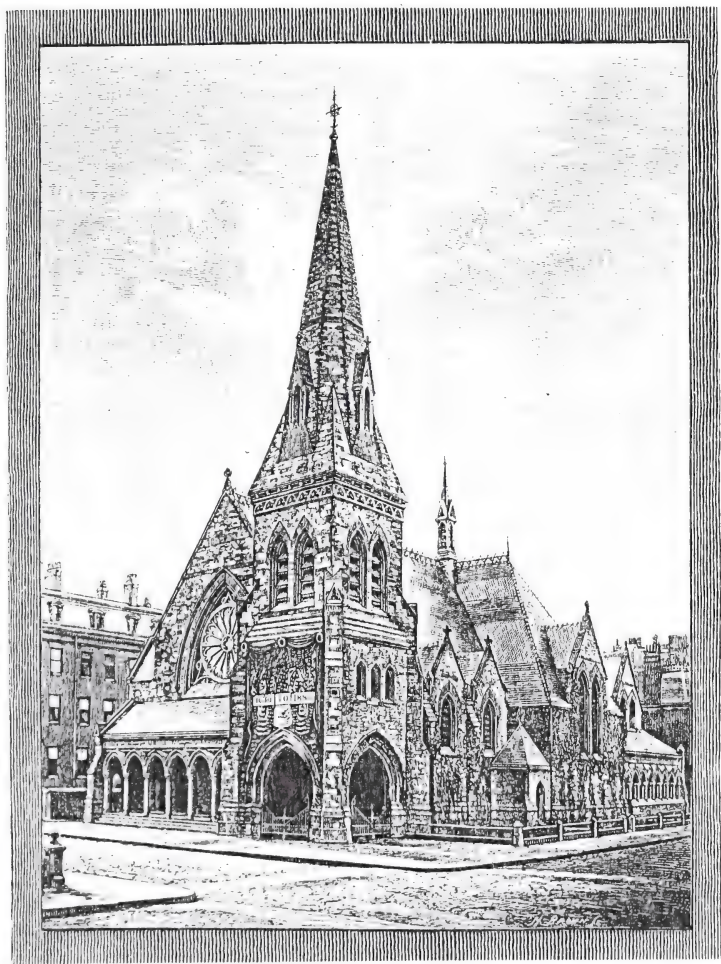
The farewell services in Chauncy Street church, on May 10, 1868, were attended by a large congregation. The pastor preached from Psalm xxvi. 8. The sermon, with the Scriptures read during the service, was printed. "Much sensibility was manifested by the worshippers, many of whom had not attended at the church for many years."¹

"On May 17, 1868,² the congregation gathered for the first time in the new chapel on Marlborough Street. We conducted our service with the aid of King's Chapel Liturgy, which is to be hereafter our

¹ Church Records, Vol. II. 58.

² During the summer of 1868 the society was invited to attend services in Arlington Street church.





FIFTH HOUSE OF WORSHIP.
CORNER OF BERKELEY AND MARLBOROUGH STREETS.

1868.



Book of Common Prayer.¹ The text was the inscription upon the cloister approach to the chapel,— ‘And all thy children shall be taught of the Lord, and great shall be the peace of thy children.’ ”

The fifth house of worship of First Church was dedicated Dec. 10, 1868. The pastor preached a sermon entitled “The Gospel committed to Living Witnesses,” — Acts i. 8. This sermon, with one preached on the first Sunday after the dedication services, entitled “The Mind to Work,” — Nehemiah iv. 6, — was printed, together with the address at the laying of the corner-stone.

The new organ arrived from Germany in 1869.²

The amount realized from the sale of the Chauncy Street property, even when added to all the available assets arising from the sale of pews in the new church and invested funds still on hand, did not nearly cover the cost of the present house of worship.

¹ Adopted by vote of the church, Tuesday, April 21, 1868. At the same meeting the present collection of hymns was substituted for “The Christian Psalter.” The adoption of the Liturgy was understood (and such has been the practice ever since) to leave room for the free indulgence of extemporaneous prayer. In 1869, the church record says, “some conversation was held as to the desirableness of conforming, in our administration of the Lord’s Supper, to the order of our Liturgy, which we have not as yet followed in this observance, still retaining our former way. The drift of opinion seemed to be against any change, though there were those who earnestly desired it.” It was suggested that at some convenient time an informal vote should be taken to ascertain the preponderance of opinion as to this subject. There are many who cleave strongly to our old way.” It does not appear that this vote was ever taken. If so, it must have opposed any alteration, for the church still clings to the old way of observing the communion.

² Mr. Otto Cuntz, a former active member of the society, among other useful services, carried on the necessary and extended correspondence with the makers of the instrument.



But with a generosity which to look back upon now seems almost incredible, various members of the society pledged themselves to cover the large deficiency. In this way four separate subscriptions were raised, amounting in all to over one hundred and twenty-five thousand dollars, until at last, by these persistent efforts, the church stood free of debt.¹ This happy state of things was reached in 1876.

Memoranda of Funds expended in Construction of the New Church, with Organ, etc., Complete.²

| | |
|--|-----------------|
| Invested fund, \$36,885, at par, April, 1866, realized | \$38,785 |
| Old church sold for net | 135,266 |
| Release of restriction to Cushing estate | 10,000 |
| Pews in new church sold for | \$56,560 |
| Less paid for pews in old church, say | 8,000 |
| | <hr/> 48,560 |
| First subscription | 83,000 |
| Second subscription | 36,100 |
| | <hr/> \$351,711 |

From this should be deducted the total of the respective amounts³ by which the expenses current have exceeded the receipts yearly, since 1864, at which time the deficiency commenced, namely:—

| | |
|--|-----------------|
| From 1864 to 1870 | \$19,720 |
| 1870 to 1871 | 6,611 |
| 1871 to 1872 | 3,800 |
| 1872 to 1873 | 4,800 |
| | <hr/> 34,931 |
| | \$316,780 |
| Taxes on the new church before occupation, omitted above | 2,500 |
| | <hr/> \$314,280 |

¹ The names of those who, by their prompt and generous action, carried the church through this period are inscribed on the records in grateful recognition of their services.

² This statement makes the church cost when complete for occupation, with organ, carpets, gas, etc., \$314,280. It finally came to about \$325,000.

³ These having been paid out of the above receipts.



In the report which the committee make at the annual meeting, April 15, they "announce to the proprietors that the corporation is now entirely free from debt, and that its affairs are in a prosperous condition, and that the current receipts from pew taxes and rents promise to fully meet the expenses for the ensuing year."

In the year 1870 members of the society, with the consent of the corporation, sent the pastor abroad for a vacation of six months, in order to recruit his health. The pulpit was meantime supplied at the expense of the society.

In the year 1878 an informal meeting of the whole society (communicants and non-communicants) was held in the chapel to listen to an account of the religious work of the church, which had now reached such large proportions. "The purpose of these gatherings, which occur annually shortly after Easter, is to create a deeper interest in the welfare of the church, and the good influences to be sent from it." Besides these meetings there have been others of late years of a more distinctively social character, at which papers have been read by various members of the congregation,—among others by the late Judge Thomas, by Nathaniel Silsbee, and by the present writer.

Arrangements were made and most successfully carried out for a recognition by the parish of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the settlement of the present pastor. The entire congregation partici-



pated in the enjoyment of the occasion. As in former times it was the custom of the church to give a new incumbent a small "token of their love and regard," so now with the same kindly motives as applied to the labors of a quarter of a century in their behalf, young and old, rich and poor, fathers, mothers, and children,—all who had any connection with the church,—joined in a most generous and appropriate recognition of those services.

In response to this general welcome the minister added the following to his anniversary sermon (preached on the following day), which the appearance of the manuscript seems to indicate had been completely written without the least suspicion of the pleasure which was in store for him:—

"I must linger a moment upon the exceeding kindness which so touched my heart yesterday. I should deserve to be called a very dull scholar if I have not learned to express my gratitude, so abundant have been my opportunities; and yet now, as ever, it seems to me that I fall short in a fitting acknowledgment of your thoughtfulness and generosity, and of the affectionate confidence which is more precious than the costliest offerings. Let me try to put into deeds what I cannot put into words; and as I thankfully accept the beautiful memorial of 'our twenty-five years together' and its accompanying bounty, and read the names of fathers and mothers and friends and young children,—the parish list which your own hands have written down for me,—may they and all their fellow-worshippers become to me anew my larger household, my own, for which only infidelity can fail to provide."

This twenty-fifth anniversary sermon (which has never been printed) gathers up a great deal of information concerning the period which it covers. It gives, for example, the following statistics: "The church books show, in the twenty-five years, three hundred and twenty-five baptisms, two hundred and twenty additions to the church covenant, and one hundred and seventy marriages, while the Sunday school has grown from fifty to four hundred and fifty."¹

In the first year of his ministry the present pastor made the following memorandum: There were "eighty families belonging to the church when I came to take charge. But some whose names are on the list were not to be found in the society; twelve or thirteen have died or removed from the city, and four no longer attend."² The entire rental of the church amounted to twenty-five hundred dollars."

The last and crowning event in the period covered by this history has already been amply recorded in another volume.³ But some mention at least of the occasion can hardly be omitted in this sketch.

¹ The number of admissions since the present minister was settled (a period of twenty-eight years) has now (June, 1881) reached three hundred and sixty-three. The number of marriages during the same period is one hundred and ninety-eight.

² The number of families at present connected with the church is two hundred and fifty, some of whom (about one hundred) are drawn to the services through the influence of the Sunday school, and occupy free seats in the gallery.

³ "The Commemoration by the First Church in Boston of the Completion of Two Hundred and Fifty Years since its Foundation," etc.

The date finally fixed upon for the celebration of the two hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the formation of the First Church in Boston was Thursday, Nov. 18, 1880. All the arrangements for its commemoration were made with great care and comprehensiveness. For the first time in the history of the church, a special programme was prepared for the occasion. The house of worship, beautiful in itself, was adorned with added attractions in the shape of choice flowers and rich decorations. The programme included three distinct observances: 1st. Exercises in the church, appointed to begin at two o'clock P. M.; 2d. A concert by the church choir at eight o'clock in the evening; 3d. A social reunion and repast in the chapel at the close of the musical entertainment. Although only a limited number of tickets to the body of the house could be issued, very few seats appeared to be vacant when the afternoon services began.

Among the invited guests were the commander (Charles W. Stevens) and staff of the Ancient and Honorable Artillery Company, — an organization almost as ancient as the parish, — who, with the committee in charge of the celebration, occupied reserved seats on the floor of the church. The gallery was free to the public. Besides the speakers there were present on the platform, erected in the chancel of the church, Mr. Ralph Waldo Emerson, Mr. Justin Winsor, Mr. Marshall P. Wilder, and the Rev.

Drs. A. P. Peabody, F. H. Hedge, E. E. Hale, and a few others. The speakers were the Hon. Nathaniel Silsbee, — who made the address of welcome in the absence of the chairman of the committee on the celebration, Mr. Nathaniel Thayer, — the Rev. George E. Ellis, D.D., the Hon. Robert C. Winthrop, his Excellency Governor John D. Long, his Honor Mayor Frederic O. Prince, President Eliot of Harvard University, President Noah Porter of Yale College, Rev. Grindall Reynolds, Rev. Phillips Brooks, D.D., Prof. C. C. Everett, D.D., Hon. Robert S. Rantoul, Rev. G. W. Briggs, D.D.

In addition to these, the pastor of the church made the opening prayer, and introduced the speakers. Joseph T. Duryea, D.D., read selections from the Scriptures, and William Everett, Ph.D., delivered a poem. The Rev. Charles T. Brooks contributed a hymn, and the exercises closed with a benediction asked by Rev. John H. Morison, D.D.

Everything combined to make the occasion most memorable in the annals of Church and State. The dignified tone of the speeches, the exquisite grace of the written contributions, and the careful rendering of the musical selections, were all so well adapted and arranged as to hold the close attention of a large and sympathetic audience to the very end, and left absolutely nothing to be desired.

At the appointed time the church choir, consisting of Miss Annie Louise Gage, soprano, Mrs. Jennie M. Noyes, contralto, Mr. W. H. Fessenden,



tenor, Mr. Clarence E. Hay, bass, and Mr. Arthur Foote, leader and accompanist, gave a most delightful concert; after which the society and a few invited guests passed into the chapel to indulge in the more informal festivities of the day. The committee of twelve in charge of the celebration consisted of the following ladies and gentlemen: Nathaniel Thayer (chairman), Hon. G. Washington Warren, George W. Wales, Hon. George S. Hale, Mrs. Jacob C. Rogers, Miss Gertrude S. Ellis, James C. White, Asa P. Potter, Joseph B. Moors, Thomas Minns, William F. Matchett, and Thomas O. Richardson.

In this connection it is proper to mention the part which the church took in the city celebration of September 17. The old ties which formerly knit the two together so closely were properly recognized on that occasion. On the evening of September 16 a fitting address was delivered in Faneuil Hall on behalf of First Church, on invitation from his Honor Mayor Prince, by the Hon. G. Washington Warren, a member of the society. On the day of the celebration Rev. George E. Ellis, D. D., in the absence of his brother, the pastor of the church, who was spending a vacation abroad, performed the duties of chaplain at the exercises which took place in the Old South Church. Besides the chaplain, a part of the committee of First Church rode in carriages as invited guests in the grand procession which followed.

The history of First Church has been thus traced down through two hundred and fifty years of unbroken prosperity. Formed at a remoter period than the town of Boston, the latter may be said to have sprung from its loins. Hand in hand the two proceeded for many years, each assisting the other in the exercise of a common sway. In course of time, however, the tie was loosened, until at last the church was left to accomplish its own work.

Two hundred and fifty years have passed since this church was gathered, and still it lives and bears its fruits. Born in adversity, in spite of all "complaints and evil prophecies," it has been steadily advancing down to the present day. Departed, some say, from the creed of its founders. Very true, but departed to some purpose. Has the religion which Christ came to teach suffered on that account? If religion lives in good works, then truly is this parent church illustrating as good a creed as that of its early fathers.

In the words of a former pastor,¹ "I have considered the days of old, the years of ancient times." But let us give heed to the warning which the perusal teaches. Communing with the past history of a church, however interesting and suggestive it may be, is scarcely worth indulging unless it affords us lessons for the future. As we look back on the long array of those whose services in this church are still a living testimony, we seem to be

¹ Dr. Frothingham in his Bicentennial sermon.



compassed about by a cloud of witnesses. We feel their presence and their guiding influence. Take courage, they seem to say. Bear up the ark of God and press onward. Another century is yet before you.

These pages were passing to the press when the nation — one might almost say in common with the civilized world, so wide-spread were the expressions of sympathy — was called upon to observe a day of mourning for the martyred President of the United States. The time set apart for the observance in Boston was eleven A. M. on Monday, Sept. 26, 1881, corresponding to the day and hour when the funeral rites were to be performed in Cleveland, Ohio.

Commemorative services were held in First Church on two successive days. The first was on Sunday, September 25, when the minister preached a memorial sermon from Rev. xx. 12, which was listened to with marked attention. On the day of the national observance the minister conducted the service for the burial of the dead, and brief impressive addresses were delivered by Dr. George E. Ellis, brother of the pastor, and Rev. O. B. Frothingham, a son of the late minister of First Church. At the close of this service the congregation united in singing the anthem, "God bless our native land," by J. S. Dwight, to the tune of "America."

On both occasions the entrances to the church,



the pulpit, choir railing, organ, chancel, and communion table were heavily draped in black, relieved with bands of white. The singing of the choir was very impressive, especially on the latter occasion, when it was without any organ accompaniment. Both services will long be remembered for the earnest and solemn manner with which they were conducted, and the profound impressions which they produced upon the congregations.



OFFICERS AND BENEFICIARIES
OF THE CHURCH.

OFFICERS AND BENEFICIARIES OF THE CHURCH.

LIST OF MINISTERS OF THE FIRST CHURCH IN BOSTON.

- JOHN WILSON. Installed as teacher, Aug. 27, 1630; as pastor, Nov. 22, 1632. Died Aug. 7, 1667, aged 78.
- JOHN COTTON. Installed as teacher, Oct. 10, 1633. Died Dec. 23, 1652,¹ aged 67.
- JOHN NORTON. Installed as teacher, July 23, 1656. Died April 5, 1663, aged 57.
- JOHN DAVENPORT. Installed as pastor, Dec. 9, 1668. Died March 15, 1670, aged 72.
- JAMES ALLEN. Installed as teacher, Dec. 9, 1668. Died Sept. 22, 1710, aged 78.
- JOHN OXENBRIDGE. Installed as pastor, April 10, 1670. Died Dec. 28, 1674, aged 66.
- JOSHUA MOODEY. Installed as assistant, May 3, 1684. Died July 4, 1697, aged 65.
- JOHN BAILEY. Installed as assistant, July 17, 1693. Died Dec. 12, 1697, aged 53.
- BENJAMIN WADSWORTH. Ordained Sept. 8, 1696. (Chosen president of Harvard College, 1725.) Died Mar. 12, 1737, aged 67.
- THOMAS BRIDGE. Installed May 10, 1705. Died Sept. 26, 1715, aged 58.
- THOMAS FOXCROFT. Ordained Nov. 20, 1717. Died June 18, 1769, aged 72.
- CHARLES CHAUNCEY, D.D. Ordained Oct. 25, 1727. Died Feb. 10, 1787, aged 82.
- JOHN CLARKE, D.D. Ordained July 8, 1778. Died April 2, 1798, aged 42.

¹ "There was a *starr* appeared on y^e 9th of y^e 10th mo 1652. darke and vet great for compasse. wth Long blaze dim also to y^e east, and was quicke in y^e motion, and every night it was less and less till y^e 22 of y^e same month and then it did no more appeare, it being y^e night before o^r Reverend Teacher m^r *John Cotton* Died y^e Greatest starr in y^e Churches of Christ y^e we could heare of in y^e Christian world for opening and unfolding y^e counsells of Christ to y^e churches, and all y^e Christian world did receive light by his Ministry." — *Church Records*, fly-leaf.



- WILLIAM EMERSON. Installed Oct. 16, 1799. Died, May 12, 1811, aged 42.
 JOHN LOVEJOY ABBOT. Ordained July 14, 1813. Died Oct. 17, 1814, aged 31.
 NATHANIEL LANGDON FROTHINGHAM, D.D. Ordained Mar. 15, 1815. (Resigned March, 1850.) Died April 4, 1870, aged 76.
 RUFUS ELLIS, D.D. Installed May 4, 1853.

RULING ELDERS OF FIRST CHURCH.

- August 27, 1630. INCREASE NOWELL.
 Nov'b'r 22, 1632. THOMAS OLIVER (died y^e 1 of y^e 11th m^o 1657).
 October 10, 1633. THOMAS LEVERETT (died the 3 : of y^e 2 m^o : 1650).
 12 of y^e 7th m^o 1650. { JAMES PENN (died y^e 30 of 8 m^o 71, *etut.* 70).
 { WILLYAM COLBRON (died y^e 1 of y^e 6th m^o 1662).
 { JACOB ELIOT (died the 6th of y^e 3^d m^o 1651).
 10 of y^e 2^d m^o 1670. JOHN WISWELL.
 28 : 2 : 72. THOMAS CLARKE.
 August 14, 1679. Mr. PROUT and Mr. ADDINGTON.
 March 19, 1694/5. Mr. JOSEPH BRIDGHAM¹ and Mr. THOMAS JACKSON.
 Sept'b'r 18, 1701. Deacon BRIDGHAM and Deacon COP.

DEACONS.

- Aug. 27, 1630. WILLIAM GAGER (died Sept. 20, 1630) and WILLIAM ASPINWALL.
 October 10, 1633. GILES FIRMIN.
 27th of y^e 9^h month 1636. Mr WILLIAM HUTCHINSON and JACOB ELYOTT.
 17 of y^e 3 m^o 1640. VALENTINE HILL and JACOB ELYOTT.
 1643 (?). WILLYAM COLBRON (or COLBORNE).
 7 m^o 1650. THOMAS MARSHALL, JAMES JOHNSON, RICH: TRUSDALL. (Johnson was dismissed from office in 1667. — *Church Records*, 31.)
 In the year 1666 & 67. JACOB ELIOT and EDWARD RANSFORD. (Both dismissed from office in 1668, during the Davenport controversy. — *Church Records*, 31.)
 14 of y^e 12 m^o 1668. HENRY BRIDGHAM, ROBERT SAUNDERS, HENRY ALLEN.
 September 6, 1696. DAVID COPP and JOHN MARION, Jun^r (died Jan. 3, 1727/8, *etut.* 75).

¹ Mr. Joseph Bridgham, one of the Ruling Elders of this Church, died Jan'y 5th 1708/9. His death was much lamented. — *Church Records*, 99.

- November 9, 1701. ISAIAH TAY (dismissed to the church of Drs. Colman and Cooper, May 14: 1721. — *Church Records*, 59, 113, 289).
 October 8, 1704. THOMAS HUBBART (died Nov. 7, 1717).
 April 12, 1719. SAMUEL MARSHALL (died Feb. 10, 1742/3, *etat.* 91) and JONATHAN WILLIAMS (died March 27, 1737, *etat.* 62).
 May 23, 1731. ZECH. THAYER (died Feb. 7, 1735/6, *etat.* 52).
 November 9, 1735. THOMAS WAIT.
 April 7 (?), 1736. CORNELIUS THAYER (died April 10, 1745, *etat.* 59).
 October 16 (?), 1737. JONATHAN WILLIAMS.
 August 18, 1747. DANIEL MARSH ("But to this day, Jan^y 1, 1754, declines being ordained." — *Church Records*, 97).
 1779 (?). JACOB WILLIAMS and JAMES THWING.
 December 20, 1789. DAVID TILDEN and JAMES MORRILL.
 February 5, 1815. JAMES HILLER FOSTER.
 May 18, 1862. GEORGE OLIVER HARRIS.
 April 11, 1872. JOHN COLLAMORE and GEORGE WASHINGTON WARREN.

 TREASURERS.

1727. JEREMIAH ALLEN (resigned in 1732).
 June 20, 1732. JONATHAN JACKSON (died in 1736).
 Aug. 20, 1736. JOHN WHEELWRIGHT.
 July 8, 1755. WILLIAM BLAIR TOWNSEND.
 July 8, 1777. JOHN WALDO.
 1778. JOSEPH WEBB.
 July 10, 1787. DAVID TILDEN (died in 1813 or 1814).
 July 26, 1814. JAMES THWING (resigned the same year).
 July 18, 1815. JAMES MORRILL.
 July 31, 1827. JAMES H. FOSTER.
 Nov. 20, 1827. WILLIAM HAYDEN, Jr.
 July 19, 1831. DAVID FRANCIS.
 July 19, 1836. BENJAMIN B. APPLETON.
 April 16, 1844. JOHN HOOPER.
 April 16, 1850. DAVID FRANCIS.
 April 19, 1853. EDWARD F. WELD.
 April 17, 1855. CHARLES L. HAYWARD.
 April 29, 1863. GEORGE W. MESSINGER.
 April 19, 1870. GEORGE O. HARRIS.
 April 17, 1877. GEORGE L. DEBLOIS.



CLERKS.

| | |
|-----------------|-----------------------|
| July 8, 1808. | SAMUEL BRADFORD. |
| July 26, 1814. | JAMES H. FOSTER. |
| July 31, 1821. | DAVID FRANCIS. |
| July 28, 1829. | DANIEL L. GIBBENS. |
| July 16, 1833. | CHARLES C. PAINE. |
| July 21, 1835. | BENJAMIN B. APPLETON. |
| July 19, 1836. | DANIEL L. GIBBENS. |
| July 17, 1838. | THOMAS SHERWIN. |
| April 19, 1842. | JOHN P. BIGELOW. |
| April 16, 1844. | J. THOMAS STEVENSON. |
| April 15, 1845. | JOHN P. BIGELOW. |
| April 21, 1846. | REV. CHARLES BROOKS. |
| Feb. 4, 1850. | JOSEPH H. BUCKINGHAM. |
| April 19, 1859. | GEORGE O. HARRIS. |
| April 17, 1877. | GEORGE L. DEBLOIS. |

EXPLANATIONS. — "Re-elected" indicates that the same individuals hold over from the preceding year, i. e. continue in office.

Where one member retires and another is substituted in his place, no other change occurring, the full list is not repeated, but the name of the new member is placed in italics; e. g., "July 12, 1743, substitute *Edward Jackson* for Capt. Bedgood;" in this case Edward Jackson is the only new member. In every other case than the foregoing, unless specially mentioned, the list for each year is given in full.

The list of admissions prior to A. D. 1640 is copied from the church records in "Memorial History of Boston," Vol. I. 565.

COMMITTEES OF SEATERS.

| | |
|------------------|--|
| Aug. 14, 1679. | Deacon ALLEN, M ^r FAYRE WEATHER, M ^r PROUT, Cap ^t TOWNSEND and M ^r DEERING. |
| June 24, 1691. | M ^r SAMPSON STODDARD, M ^r BROWNE, and M ^r JAMES BARNES "added" to the aforesaid Committee. |
| Nov. 24, 1691. | PARSONS, SAMPSON STODDARD, and BROWNE. |
| Jan. 12, 1693/4. | M ^r COOKE & M ^r ADINGTON "added to the three" [preceding]. |
| April 2, 1713. | Dr. COOK, Coll ^d HUTCHINSON, M ^r ADDINGTON, M ^r ELIAKIM HUTCHINSON, Coll ^d TOWNSEND, Deacon MARION, M ^r WELSTED, M ^r JER. ALLEN, M ^r GOUGH. |
| Sept. 27, 1715. | Deacon HUBBARD, added to the aforesaid Committee. |

- Aug. 18, 1718. "ELISHA COOK, Esq^r., & WILLIAM HUTCHINSON, Esq^r., were chosen seaters to join with and assist the seaters that be already."
- May 18, 1725. Hon. Coll. TOWNSEND, Mr. Treasurer ALLIN, Capt. GOOCH, Capt. GREEN, & Mr. JONATHAN WALDO.
- Jan. 25, 1727/8. ELISHA COOKE, JER. ALLEN, NATH^l. GREEN, JAMES GOOCH, and JONth WALDO.
- Aug. 16, 1731. Col. BYFIELD, Cap^t WADSWORTH, Mr. JACKSON, Cap^t BEDGOOD, and Mr. CORNELIUS WALDO.
- Aug. 20, 1736. JOSEPH HUBBARD and JOHN WHEELWRIGHT, chosen to fill vacancies. (Seaters chosen annually after this date.)
- Aug. 31, 1737. The Hon^{ble} JOSEPH WADSWORTH, Esq.,¹ Capt. JEFFRY BEDGOOD, Mr. JOSEPH HUBBARD, Mr. CORNELIUS WALDOE, and Mr. NATH^l. BALSTON.
- Jan. 23, 1738/9. (Substitute *Hon. Col: Winthrop* for Hon. JOSEPH WADSWORTH.)
- July 14, 1742. (Re-elected.)
- July 12, 1743. Substitute *Edward Jackson* for Capt. BEDGOOD.
- July 10, 1744. Substitute *Mr. Edward Gray* for Col. WINTHROP.
- July 9, 1745. (Re-elected.)
- July 22, 1746. (Re-elected.)

ANNUAL COMMITTEES.

(The name of the committee is changed and their functions enlarged in 1747 by vote of the church. — *Church Records*, 161.)

- July 14, 1747. (Re-elected.)
- July 25, 1748. (Re-elected.)
- July 28, 1749. (Re-elected.)
- July 10, 1750. (Substitute *Capt. Jeremiah Green* for Mr. EDWARD GRAY.)
- July 23, 1751. NATH^l. BALSTON, Esq., JEREMY GREEN, Esq., Mr. EDWARD JACKSON, Mr. JONATHAN WILLIAMS.
- July 30, 1751. (Increased to 7.) CORNELIUS WALDO, Esq., Mr. JOSEPH HUBBARD, & Maj^r THWING.

¹ Not a communicant.



STANDING COMMITTEES.

(The term "Standing Committee" is first distinctively applied in 1752.)

- July 14, 1752. NATH^L BALSTON, Esq., EDWARD JACKSON, JER. GREEN, Esq., DEACON WAITE, Mr. SAM. HILL, Mr. W^M BLAIR TOWNSEND, & DEACON WILLIAMS.
- July 10, 1753. NATH^L BALSTON, Esq., CAPT. JER. GREEN, Mr. SAM^{EL} HILL, Mr. W^M BLAIR TOWNSEND, MAJ^R NATH^L THWING, Mr. W^M FAIRFIELD, & Mr. BENJA. AUSTIN.
- July 9, 1754. (Reduced to 5.) JEREMIAH GREEN, Esq., Mr. EDWARD JACKSON, Mr. BENJA. AUSTIN, Mr. SAMUEL HILL, & W^M FAIRFIELD.
- July 8, 1755. (Increased to 7.) Mr. TOWNSEND & Mr. KNIGHT added to the preceding number.
- July 13, 1756. (Substitute *Middlecott Cooke* for Mr. KNIGHT.)
- July 19, 1757. (Substitute *Joseph Green* for EDWARD JACKSON.)
- July 11, 1758. (Re-elected.)
- July 9, 1759. (Re-elected.)
- July 7, 1760. (Substitute *John Wheelwright* for W^M FAIRFIELD.)
- July 14, 1761. (Substitute *John Gray* for JOHN WHEELWRIGHT.)
- July 27, 1762. (Re-elected.)
- July 12, 1763. (Substitute *John Salter* for SAM^{EL} HILL.)
- July 10, 1764. (Re-elected.)
- July 9, 1765. (Re-elected.)
1766. (No record.)
- July 14, 1767. (Re-elected.)
- July 12, 1768. (Substitute *Daniel Waldo* for JOHN SALTER.)
- July 11, 1769. (Substitute *Samuel Partridge* for DANIEL WALDO.)
- July 10, 1770. (Re-elected.)
- July 10, 1771. (Substitute *Samuel Pemberton, Esq.*, for MIDDLECOT COOKE.)
- July 1772. (Re-elected.)
- July 13, 1773. (Re-elected.)
- July 12, 1774. (Re-elected.)
1775. (No record.)
- Aug. 13, 1776. JER^Y GREEN, Esq., SAM^L PEMBERTON, Esq., JN^O GRAY, Esq., CAPT. SAM^L PARTRIDGE, JOSEPH GREENLEAF, Esq., JN^O LEVERETT, Esq., & Mr. JAMES THWING.
- July 8, 1777. (Substitute *Joseph Webb* for JN^O LEVERETT.)
- July 13, 1778. JOHN GRAY, Esq., CAPT. SAMUEL PARTRIDGE, Mr. JAMES THWING, Mr. JOSEPH WEBB, Mr. JACOB WILLIAMS, JOHN BROWNE, & Mr. JOHN WALDO.
- July 6, 1779. (Substitute *John Lowell* for JOHN WALDO.)
- July 11, 1780. (Substitute *Hon. Benj. Austin* for JAMES THWING.)



- July 10, 1781. Hon. BENJ. AUSTIN, J^NO BROWN, Esq., Capt SAM. PARTRIDGE, JOSEPH WEBB, M^r JOHN CUNNINGHAM, Deacon JACOB WILLIAMS, M^r JOHN LOWELL, & Capt. J^NO HINKLEY.
- July 9, 1782. (Reduced to 3.) Hon^{ble} BENJ. AUSTIN, Deacon JACOB WILLIAMS, JOSEPH WEBB.
- July 15, 1783. (Increased to 5.) Cap^t SAM^l PARTRIDGE, JOSEPH WEBB, Dea. JACOB WILLIAMS, Capt. J^NO NEWELL, Cap^t CORN^l FELLOWS.
- July 6, 1784. (Increased to 6.) Dea. JACOB WILLIAMS, Dea. JAMES THWING, Cap^t SAM^l PARTRIDGE, JOHN GRAY, Esq., M^r JOSEPH RUSSELL, JOSEPH WEBB.
- July 12, 1785. (Reduced to 5.) Dⁿ JACOB WILLIAMS, Dⁿ JAS THWING, JOSEPH WEBB, JOSEPH RUSSELL, JOS. BARRELL.
- July 17, 1786. (Substitute *D^r N. W. Appleton* for JOS. BARRELL.)
- Aug. 14, 1786. JOS. BARRELL & JAMES MORRILL were added to the preceding.
- July 10, 1787. Mr. JOSEPH RUSSELL, JOSEPH BARRELL, Esq., Deacon JAMES THWING, Deacon JACOB WILLIAMS, M^r JAMES MORRILL.
- July 8, 1788. Deacon JACOB WILLIAMS, JOSEPH BARRELL, Esq., Mr. DAVID TILDEN, M^r WILLIAM MORRILL, Mr. WILLIAM SMITH.
- July 8, 1788. Mr. JAMES MORRILL was added.
- July 7, 1789. Hon. BENJAMIN AUSTIN, Jr., M^r JAMES MORRILL, JOSEPH BARRELL, Esq., Dr. NATHANIEL W. APPLETON, WILLIAM SMITH.
- Aug. 9, 1789. (Substitute *Samuel Cabot* for JOSEPH BARRELL.)
- July 6, 1790. (Re-elected.)
- July 10, 1791. (Re-elected.)
- July 3, 1792. (Re-elected.)
- July 2, 1793. (Substitute *John Joy* for SAM. CABOT.)
- July 8, 1794. DAVID TILDEN, JAMES MORRILL, WILLIAM SMITH, NATHANIEL FELLOWS, SAMUEL CLAP.
- July 7, 1795. (Increased to 6.) DAVID TILDEN, JAMES MORRILL, WILLIAM SMITH, NATHANIEL FELLOWS, JON^s L. AUSTIN, WILLIAM LITTLE.
- July 11, 1796. (Re-elected.)
- July 11, 1797. (Re-elected.)
- July 17, 1798. WILLIAM SMITH, JON^s L. AUSTIN, DAN^d D. ROGERS, JOHN JOY, JAMES MORRILL, DAVID TILDEN.
- July 23, 1799. (Re-elected.)
- July 10, 1800. DAVID TILDEN, JAMES MORRILL, WILLIAM SMITH, DANIEL D. ROGERS, JON^s L. AUSTIN, JOHN JOY, SAMUEL BRADFORD.
- July 14, 1801. DAVID TILDEN, JAMES MORRILL, WILLIAM SMITH, JON^s L. AUSTIN, JOHN JOY, SAM^l BRADFORD.
- July 27, 1802. (Re-elected.)

- July 11, 1803. (Re-elected.)
 July 10, 1804. (Re-elected.)
 July 9, 1805. (Substitute *Enoch Huse* for JON^A L. AUSTIN.)
 July 8, 1806. (Re-elected.)
 July 14, 1807. (Re-elected.)
 July 19, 1808. (Re-elected.)
 July 18, 1809. (Re-elected.)
 July 17, 1810. (Re-elected.)
 July 16, 1811. (Re-elected.)
 July 21, 1812. (Re-elected.)
 July 12, 1813. (Increased to 9). DAVID TILDEN, JAMES MORRILL, JOHN JOY, WILLIAM SMITH, ENOCH HUSE, SAM. BRADFORD, JAMES THWING, JAMES PHILLIPS, ED. REYNOLDS.
 July 26, 1814. JAMES MORRILL, JAMES THWING, WILLIAM SMITH, ENOCH HUSE, JAMES PHILLIPS, EDWARD REYNOLDS, DANIEL MESSINGER, JAMES H. FOSTER.
 July 18, 1815. JAMES MORRILL, WILLIAM SMITH, DANIEL SARGENT, ENOCH HUSE, EDWARD REYNOLDS, DANIEL MESSINGER, JAMES PHILLIPS, PETER C. BROOKS, JAMES H. FOSTER.
 July 23, 1816. (Substitute *Turner Phillips* for WILLIAM SMITH.)
 July 29, 1817. (Substitute *Allen Crocker* for ENOCH HUSE.)
 July 28, 1818. (Re-elected.)
 July 27, 1819. (Re-elected.)
 Aug. 1, 1820. (Re-elected.)
 July 31, 1821. (Re-elected.)
 July 30, 1822. (Substitute *David Francis* for JAMES PHILLIPS.)
 July 29, 1823. (Re-elected.)
 July 27, 1824. DEACON MORRILL, DEACON FOSTER, D. MESSINGER, P. C. BROOKS, J. P. BRADLEE, CHARLES SPRAGUE, EBEN^R CHADWICK, D. L. GIBBENS, D. FRANCIS.
 Aug. 2, 1825. JAMES MORRILL, JAMES H. FOSTER, DANIEL MESSINGER, PETER C. BROOKS, JAMES PHILLIPS, DAVID FRANCIS, DANIEL L. GIBBENS, EBEN^R CHADWICK, JOSEPH OTIS.
 Aug. 1, 1826. (Substitute *Charles Sprague* for JAMES PHILLIPS.)
 July 31, 1827. DEACON MORRILL, DEACON FOSTER, DANIEL MESSINGER, DANIEL L. GIBBENS, DAVID FRANCIS, JOSEPH OTIS, PETER C. BROOKS, JAMES PHILLIPS, JOSEPH T. BUCKINGHAM.
 July 29, 1828. DEACON MORRILL, DANIEL MESSINGER, DANIEL L. GIBBENS, JOSEPH OTIS, JOSEPH BRADLEE, CHARLES SPRAGUE, EBENEZER CHADWICK, J. T. BUCKINGHAM, DAVID FRANCIS.
 July 28, 1829. (Substitute *James Phillips* for JOSEPH OTIS.)
 July 20, 1830. (Re-elected.)
 July 19, 1831. (Re-elected.)

- July 17, 1832. (Re-elected.)
 July 16, 1833. JAMES PHILLIPS (*Chairman*), SAMUEL H. BABCOCK, ASA RICHARDSON, DANIEL MESSINGER, DAVID FRANCIS, DANIEL L. GIBBENS, JOSEPH T. BUCKINGHAM, WILLIAM HAYDEN, JR., GEORGE BARKER.
- July 15, 1834. DANIEL L. GIBBENS, DANIEL MESSINGER, WILLIAM HAYDEN, JR., DAVID FRANCIS, SAMUEL H. BABCOCK, GEORGE BARKER, JAMES PHILLIPS, WILLIAM B. FOWLE, HAZEN MORSE.
- July 21, 1835. (Re-elected; DANIEL MESSINGER chosen *Chairman*.)
 July 19, 1836. (Substitute *Noah Doggett* for WILLIAM B. FOWLE.)
 July 18, 1837. (Re-elected.)
 July 17, 1838. DANIEL MESSINGER, JAMES PHILLIPS, WILLIAM HAYDEN, JR., S. H. BABCOCK, GEORGE BARKER, NOAH DOGGETT, WILLIAM G. BROOKS, B. B. APPLETON, JOHN HOOPER.
- July 16, 1839. D. L. GIBBENS (*Chairman*), J. S. FOSTER, J. PHILLIPS, WILLIAM HAYDEN, JR., S. H. BABCOCK, GEORGE BARKER, N. DOGGETT, JOHN HOOPER, B. B. APPLETON.
- July 21, 1840. D. L. GIBBENS, W. HAYDEN, GEORGE BARKER, B. B. APPLETON, JOHN HOOPER, S. L. ABBOT, THOMAS SHERWIN, F. H. BRADLEE, T. B. WALES.
- July 20, 1841. D. L. GIBBENS, B. B. APPLETON, JOHN HOOPER, S. L. ABBOT, S. H. BABCOCK, JOS. WEST, J. P. BIGELOW, JOHN E. THAYER, S. H. RICH.
- April 19, 1842. (Re-elected.)
 April 18, 1843. DANIEL L. GIBBENS, BENJAMIN B. APPLETON, JOHN HOOPER, JOHN ELIOT THAYER, JOHN P. BIGELOW, SAMUEL HENSHAW, JONATHAN PRESTON, SAMUEL BRADLEE, JOHN THOMAS STEVENSON.
- April 16, 1844. SAMUEL HENSHAW (*Chairman*), SAMUEL BRADLEE, J. THOS. STEVENSON, JOHN ELIOT THAYER, JOHN HOOPER, JOSEPH WEST, SAMUEL FROTHINGHAM, JR.
- April 15, 1845. (Substitute *John P. Bigelow* for SAMUEL BRADLEE.)
 April 21, 1846. (Substitute *Charles Brooks* for JOHN P. BIGELOW.)
 April 13, 1847. (Re-elected.)
 April 11, 1848. (Re-elected.)
 April 10, 1849. (Re-elected.)
 April 16, 1850. EZRA LINCOLN (*Chairman*), DAVID FRANCIS, JAMES T. HAYWARD, THOMAS B. WALES, JR., OTIS RICH, CHRISTOPHER C. CHADWICK, J. T. W. SARGENT.
- April 15, 1851. EZRA LINCOLN, DAVID FRANCIS, JAMES T. HAYWARD, THOMAS B. WALES, JR., OTIS RICH, SAMUEL L. ABBOT, HORACE DUPEE.
- April 20, 1852. EDWARD EVERETT (*Chairman*), NATH^L. L. FROTHINGHAM, SAM^L. L. ABBOT, HORACE DUPEE, DAVID FRANCIS, OTIS RICH, J. T. W. SARGENT.



- April 19, 1853. (Substitute *William Hayden* for DAVID FRANCIS.)
 July 18, 1853. (Substitute *Edward F. Weld* for EDWARD EVERETT.)
 April 18, 1854. WILLIAM HAYDEN (*Chairman*), N. L. FROTHINGHAM,
 OTIS RICH, SAMUEL L. ABBOT, HORACE DUPEE, ED-
 WARD F. WELD, THOMAS B. WALES.
 April 17, 1855. WILLIAM HAYDEN, OTIS RICH, SAMUEL L. ABBOT, HOR-
 ACE DUPEE, CHARLES L. HAYWARD, GEORGE BATES,
 THOMAS B. WALES.
 April 15, 1856. (Re-elected.)
 April 21, 1857. (Substitute *Prescott Bigelow* for GEORGE BATES.)
 April 20, 1858. (Re-elected.)
 April 19, 1859. (Re-elected.)
 April 17, 1860. (Re-elected.)
 April 16, 1861. (Re-elected.)
 April 15, 1862. (Re-elected.)
 April 21, 1863. (Substitute *George W. Messinger* for WILLIAM HAYDEN;
 THOMAS B. WALES chosen *Chairman*.)
 April 19, 1864. THOMAS B. WALES, OTIS RICH, SAMUEL L. ABBOT,
 GEORGE W. MESSINGER, NATHANIEL THAYER, JOHN
 COLLAMORE, D. W. SALISBURY.
 April 18, 1865. (Re-elected.)
 April 17, 1866. (Substitute *Samuel H. Gookin* for OTIS RICH.)
 April 16, 1867. NATHANIEL THAYER (*Chairman*), GEORGE W. MESSIN-
 GER, SAMUEL L. ABBOT, SAMUEL H. GOOKIN, D.
 WALDO SALISBURY, GEORGE W. WALES, TURNER SAR-
 GENT.
 April 21, 1868. (Re-elected.)
 April 20, 1869. (Increased to 12.) NATHANIEL THAYER, GEORGE W.
 MESSINGER, SAMUEL L. ABBOT, SAMUEL H. GOOKIN,
 D. WALDO SALISBURY, GEORGE W. WALES, TURNER
 SARGENT, ANDREW T. HALL, HENRY SALSTONSTALL,
 JOHN H. REED, JOSEPH B. MOORS, DANIEL L. SPOONER.
 April 19, 1870. (Substitute *Jacob C. Rogers* for DANIEL L. SPOONER.)
 April 18, 1871. NATHANIEL THAYER, SAMUEL L. ABBOT, SAMUEL H.
 GOOKIN, D. WALDO SALISBURY, GEORGE W. WALES,
 TURNER SARGENT, ANDREW T. HALL, JOHN H. REED,
 JOSEPH B. MOORS, JACOB C. ROGERS, GEORGE O.
 SHATTUCK, SEWALL H. FESSENDEN.
 April 16, 1872. (Substitute *Otis Drury* for SAMUEL H. GOOKIN.)
 April 15, 1873. (Substitute *Thomas Minns* for SEWALL H. FESSENDEN.)
 April 21, 1874. NATHANIEL THAYER, SAMUEL L. ABBOT, D. WALDO
 SALISBURY, GEORGE W. WALES, TURNER SARGENT,
 ANDREW T. HALL, JOHN H. REED, JOSEPH B. MOORS,
 GEORGE O. SHATTUCK, THOMAS MINNS, WILLIAM
 F. MATCHETT, JAMES C. WHITE.
 April 20, 1875. (Substitute *Daniel C. Holder* for TURNER SARGENT.)

- April 18, 1876. NATHANIEL THAYER, SAMUEL L. ABBOT, D. WALDO SALISBURY, GEORGE W. WALES, JOHN H. REED, JOSEPH B. MOORS, GEORGE O. SHATTUCK, WILLIAM F. MATCHETT, JAMES C. WHITE, DANIEL C. HOLDER, REUBEN E. DEMMON, THOMAS O. RICHARDSON.
- April 17, 1877. (Substitute *Asa P. Potter* for JOHN H. REED.)
- April 16, 1878. (Substitute *William A. Haskell* for NATHANIEL THAYER; GEORGE W. WALES chosen Chairman.)
- April 15, 1879. (Re-elected.)
- April 20, 1880. (Increased to 13.) GEORGE W. WALES, SAMUEL L. ABBOT, D. WALDO SALISBURY, JOSEPH B. MOORS, GEORGE O. SHATTUCK, WILLIAM F. MATCHETT, JAMES C. WHITE, DANIEL C. HOLDER, REUBEN E. DEMMON, THOMAS O. RICHARDSON, ASA P. POTTER, WILLIAM A. HASKELL, JACOB C. ROGERS.
- April 19, 1881. (Re-elected.)

ORGANISTS.

(This list is very incomplete down to 1850.)

- July 17, 1786. (First mentioned by name, but appears to have served for some time previous to this date.) JOHN GREENLEAF.
(Had not retired July 14, 1807.)

(The election of an organist passed into the charge of a special committee early in Dr. Frothingham's ministry, so that the record fails to mention his name among the list of appointments at the annual meetings.)

1825. THOMAS TRUEMAN SPEAR. Resigned in 1832.
G. W. T. JONES. Resigned in 1832.
1850. DAVID PAINE. Resigned in 1869.
1869. EUGENE THAYER. Resigned June 15, 1875.
- Sept. 15, 1875. HOWARD E. PARKHURST. Resigned in 1878.
- Oct. 1, 1878. ARTHUR FOOTE.

SEXTONS.

The following entry is dated July 12, 1743, and appears to be the first time the office is mentioned on the records: "*Voted*. That the Deacons be desired to pay to the Sexton for his Service Ten pounds p Quarter old Tenour for one Year next coming."

- July 28, 1749. (First mentioned by name.) THOMAS WILLISTON.
1776. GEORGE ROULSTONE (or ROLSTONE). Died in 1781.
- July 12, 1785. (First mentioned by name.) MATTHEW JAMES.



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| July 6, 1790. | LEMUEL LUDDEN. Died or resigned in 1802. |
| July 11, 1803. | (First mentioned by name.) JAMES MENZIES. |
| July 10, 1804. | EBENEZER CLAFLAND (or CLAFLEN). Died in 1831. |
| April 7, 1831. | FRANCIS DILLAWAY. Died in 1850. |
| Sept. 9, 1850. | M. S. DODD. Died in February, 1864. |
| 1804. | EBENEZER SANBORN. Died July 28, 1880. |
| May 1, 1880. | JOHN H. HAWES. |

DISPOSITION OF ELDER PENN'S LEGACY.

[The will of James Penn is dated 29th September, 1671, and provides for the payment of £10 out of the farm at Pullen Point (now Chelsea) to the Elders and Deacons of First Church for the maintenance of such poor scholar or scholars at *Harvard College* as they shall see fit.]

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| July 18, 1720. | HULL ABBOT. |
| Sept. 10, 1722. | WM SHEAF, NATHANIEL DAVIS of Roxbury, S ^r ABBOT, S ^r COTTON. |
| Feb. 5, 1723 ¹ / ₄ . | S ^r DUNBAR, S ^r SHEIF. |
| Oct. 12, 1724. | S ^r DAVIS (whose friends live at Roxbury), WEBB, SEN- IOR SOPHISTER. |
| Dec. 27, 1725. | M ^r WEBB'S son, Mad ^m COTTON'S son. |
| Oct. 17, 1726. | Rev. M ^r WALTER'S son, Rev. M ^r ROWLAND COTTON'S son. |
| July 3, 1727. | Rev. M ^r N. WALTER'S son. |
| July 1, 1728. | M ^r WALTER'S son. |
| July 1, 1729. | M ^r WALTER'S son. |
| July 1, 1730. | CHRIST ^y BRIDGE. |
| July -, 1731. | CHRIST ^y BRIDGE. |
| July 11, 1732. | CHRIST ^y BRIDGE. |
| July -, 1733. | CHRIST ^y BRIDGE. |
| July -, 1734. | S ^r BRIDGE. |
| Oct. 27, 1735. | M ^r NATH ^l . GARDNER'S son. |
| Aug ^t 1736. | M ^r NATH ^l . GARDNER'S son. |
| July 1, 1737. | M ^r NATH ^l . GARDNER'S son. |
| July -, 1738. | M ^r NATH ^l . GARDNER'S son. |
| July 6, 1739. | M ^r NATH ^l . GARDNER'S son. |
| July 2, 1740. | Son of y ^e Rev. M ^r JOHN BROWN (of Havethill). |
| July -, 1741. | Son of y ^e Rev. M ^r BROWN. |
| July -, 1742. | Son of y ^e Rev. M ^r BROWN. |
| July -, 1743. | Another son of the late Rev ^d M ^r BROWN and TUREL. |



DISPOSITION OF ELDER PENN'S LEGACY. 339

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| July, 1744. | TURELL and two sons of the Rev. Mr PERKYNs. |
| July, 1745. | Son of Mr ^s BROWN (wid. of y ^e late Rev ^d Mr John Brown), Rev. Mr PERKYNs's son, Mr MATTHEW ADAMS's son. |
| March 21, 1746/7. | THOMAS FOXCROFT, Jr. (son of the Pastor of the church). |
| Dec. 23, 1747. | THOMAS FOXCROFT, Jr. |
| 1748. | Mr MANNING's son, y ^e late Rev. Mr WILLARD's son, the late Rev. Mr BROWN's son. |
| 1749. | EBENEZER THAYER (son of Mr Nathaniel Thayer). |
| March 14, 1750/1. | EBENEZER THAYER, SAMUEL FOXCROFT (son of the Pastor of the church). |
| Dec. 16, 1751. | EBENEZER THAYER, SAMUEL FOXCROFT. |
| July, 1752. | EBENEZER THAYER, SAMUEL FOXCROFT. |
| July, 1753. | EBENEZER THAYER, SAMUEL FOXCROFT. |
| 1755 & 1756. | EBENEZER THAYER, SAMUEL FOXCROFT. |
| July, 1757. | WILLIAMS BRADFORD. |
| July, 1758. | WILLIAMS BRADFORD. |
| July, 1759. | WILLIAMS BRADFORD. |
| July, 1760. | CHRISTOPHER BRIDGE MARSH (son of Deacon Daniel Marsh of First Church). |
| July, 1761. | Rev. Mr STONE's son. |
| July, 1762. | Son of Rev ^d Mr HULL ABBOT. |
| July, 1763. | Son of Rev ^d Mr HULL ABBOT. |
| July, 1764. | Mr ABBOT's son. |
| July, 1765. | THOMSON (son of Rev ^d Mr Thomson of Scarborough). |
| 1799. | ANDREW ELIOT THAYER (son of Mrs. Martha Thayer). |
| July 1, 1800. | ANDREW ELIOT THAYER. |
| July 1, 1801. | SAMUEL RIPLEY. |
| July 1, 1802. | ANDREW ELIOT THAYER. |
| July 1, 1803. | DANIEL BLISS RIPLEY. |
| July 2, 1804. | EBENEZER HUBBARD. |
| July 8, 1805. | WILLIAM SMITH. |
| July 7, 1806. | BENJA WILLARD. |
| July 1, 1807. | WILLIAM SMITH. |
| July 1, 1808. | JOHN H. FARNHAM. |
| July 1, 1809. | JOHN H. FARNHAM. |
| July 2, 1810. | JOHN H. FARNHAM. |
| July, 1811. | JOHN H. FARNHAM. |
| July 1, 1812. | RUFUS HURLBUT. |
| Aug. 21, 1813. | RUFUS HURLBUT. |
| July, 1814. | SAMUEL HUNT. |
| July, 1815. | WILLIAM EMERSON. |



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| July, 1816. | WILLIAM EMERSON. | 1841. | NATHANIEL G. ALLEN. |
| July, 1817. | RALPH WALDO EMERSON. | 1842. | THOMAS HILL. |
| July, 1818. | RALPH WALDO EMERSON. | 1843. | CHARLES SHORT. |
| July, 1819. | RALPH WALDO EMERSON. | 1844. | CHARLES SHORT. |
| July, 1820. | RALPH WALDO EMERSON. | 1845. | CHARLES SHORT. |
| July, 1821. | EDWARD B. EMERSON. | 1846. | JAMES MORRILL ALLEN. |
| July, 1822. | EDWARD B. EMERSON. | 1847. | JAMES MORRILL ALLEN. |
| July, 1823. | EDWARD B. EMERSON. | 1848. | JAMES MORRILL ALLEN (?). |
| July, 1824. | CHARLES C. EMERSON. | 1849. | JAMES MORRILL ALLEN (?). |
| July, 1825. | CHARLES C. EMERSON. | 1850. | SIDNEY WILLARD (?). |
| July, 1826. | CHARLES C. EMERSON. | 1851. | SIDNEY WILLARD. |
| July, 1827. | CHARLES C. EMERSON. | 1852. | SIDNEY WILLARD. |
| 1828. | CHARLES C. EMERSON. | 1853. | GEO. A. W. CHAMBERLAIN. |
| 1829. | CHARLES H. ALLEN. | 1854. | CHARLES A. ALLEN. |
| 1830. | CHARLES H. ALLEN. | 1855. | CHARLES A. ALLEN. |
| 1831. | CHARLES H. ALLEN. | 1856. | CHARLES A. ALLEN. |
| 1832. | JOHN CLARK ALLEN. | 1857. | CHARLES A. ALLEN. |
| 1833. | JOHN CLARK ALLEN. | 1858. | ROBERT WILLARD. |
| 1834. | HENRY DAVID THOREAU. | 1859. | ROBERT WILLARD. |
| 1835. | HENRY DAVID THOREAU. | 1860. | STEPHEN G. EMERSON. |
| 1836. | HENRY DAVID THOREAU. | 1861. | FREDERIC WARE. |
| 1837. | HENRY DAVID THOREAU. | 1862. | FREDERIC WARE. |
| 1838. | NATHANIEL G. ALLEN. | 1863. | FREDERIC WARE. |
| 1839. | NATHANIEL G. ALLEN. | 1864. | FREDERIC WARE. |
| 1840. | NATHANIEL G. ALLEN. | 1865. | JOHN HILLIS. |

[The rent charge having grown very cumbersome, the pastor and deacon of the church, at the request of the owners of the property, secured an act of the Legislature in 1866 authorizing them to re-lease it and invest and hold the proceeds (\$600) in trust for the purposes mentioned in the will.]

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| 1865. | JOHN HILLIS. | 1874. | EDMUND Q. S. OSGOOD. |
| 1867. | JOHN HILLIS. | 1875. | GEORGE OSGOOD. |
| 1868. | EDWARD OSGOOD OTIS. | 1876. | GEORGE OSGOOD. |
| 1869. | EDWARD OSGOOD OTIS. | 1877. | PARRY KENNARD SOLGER. |
| 1870. | EDWARD OSGOOD OTIS. | 1878. | H. IRVING DILLENBACK. |
| 1871. | ARTHUR L. GOODRICH. | 1879. | WILLIAM H. PAGE. |
| 1872. | ARTHUR L. GOODRICH. | 1880. | WILLIAM H. PAGE. |
| 1873. | ARTHUR L. GOODRICH. | 1881. | WILLIAM H. PAGE. |

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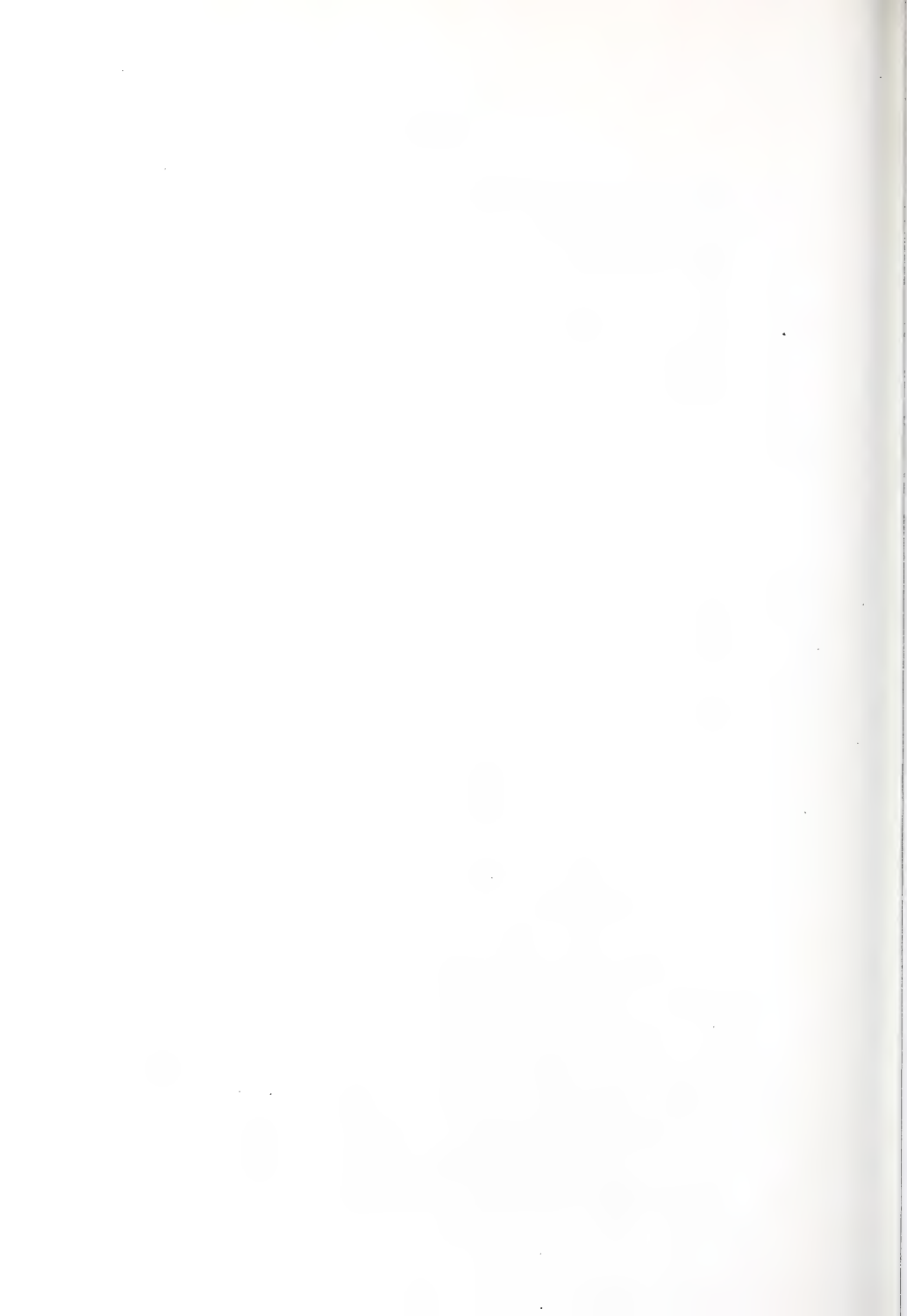
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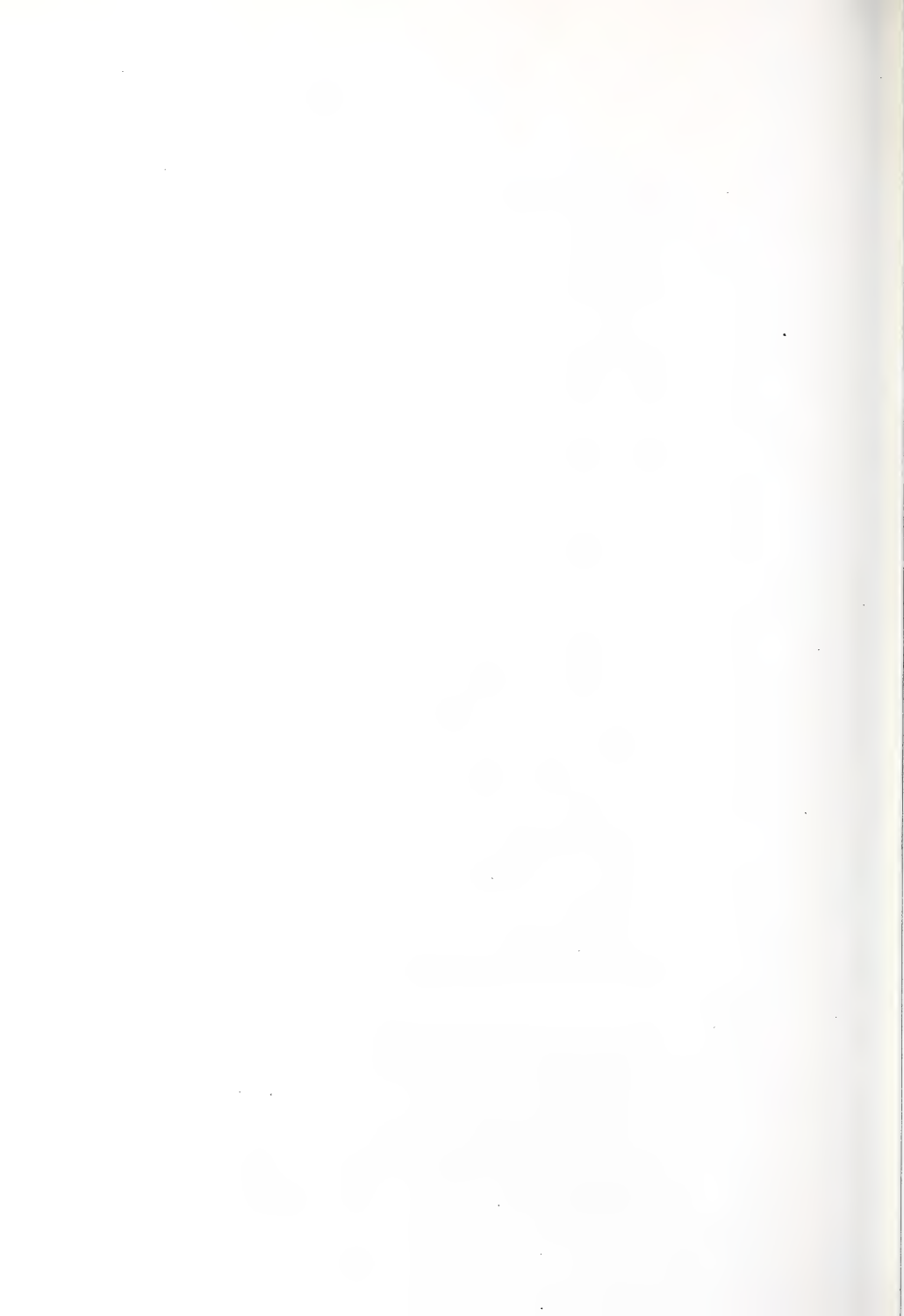
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